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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 13th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 71: SCIENCE AND PEACE (A/45/601; A/SPC/45/L.11)

1. Mrs. CASTRO DE BARISH (Costa Rica), introducing draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.11, said that its format was similar to that of General Assembly resolution 43/61 of 6 December 1988, in which, following a proposal submitted by the delegation of Costa Rica, the Assembly had proclaimed the International Week of Science and Peace, which would take place each year during the week in which 11 November fell. Its purpose was to encourage and foster the use of science for peace and the benefit of mankind and to promote disarmament and arms control.

2. As had been demonstrated, the Week should continue to be commemorated, since it had given rise to a series of activities which fostered an awareness of the importance of promoting international co-operation and instilling into scientists a sense of ethics and responsibility with regard to the way in which their experiments and discoveries were used.

3. Over the centuries, science had played two major roles: one was to describe and explain observable phenomena, while the other, which was of a practical nature, was to provide mankind with a means of using the knowledge it had acquired for its own benefit. That practical value did not allow science to remain aloof from the consequences which it could produce, and made it necessary to draw a distinction between science for war and science for peace. Scientists must be aware of the purposes for which their discoveries would be used, and societies should know what application those discoveries would have since, although science had contributed to the improvement of the quality of human life and the human environment, it could also lead to the destruction of all forms of civilization and of life itself.

4. There was a direct link between scientific activity and the development of peoples. Science should be used for the benefit of mankind and should not create the the means for its destruction. That was why the United Nations should promote, at the global level, greater awareness among scientists of how science could be used to enhance international peace, security and co-operation and social and economic development, promote human rights and protect the environment - concepts which were contained in the draft resolution co-sponsored by Costa Rica.

5. It was very encouraging to note the quantity and quality of the activities carried out by many States Members of the United Nations. Among the central themes of such activities, which had received wide media coverage, were the links between scientific and technological development and peace, the special role of scientists in promoting peace, and scientific responsibility and moral considerations in the conduct of scientific research. All that proved that the seed planted two years ago had sprouted and would continue to bear fruit with the support which the international community had provided and would continue to provide.

6. Costa Rica had observed the International Week of Science and Peace with great enthusiasm and had organized various activities, such as courses in scientific

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(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa Rica)

journalism; a series of lectures on development; prizes to encourage young people gifted in science; a seminar on the revision of teaching activities with a view to placing greater emphasis on environmental education, nutrition, humanistic education and the relationship between progress, technology and peace; a training course in the use of nuclear energy for professionals from various national institutions; and agreements of private and public enterprises on the establishment of technological management units for the purpose of strengthening the productive sector.

7. Mr. BOUTS'KO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that there had always been a close link between science and peace. Unfortunately, science had also brought mankind face to face with the threat of self-destruction, and the international community was rightly concerned about the purposes for which the powerful forces of science were used. It was clearer than ever that States could not achieve security at the expense of the security of others and, in an increasingly interdependent world, it was necessary to promote co-operation and understanding among all countries.

8. The end of the cold war had brought about increased confidence, mutual understanding and co-operation, and the world scientific community should take advantage of that favourable turn of events which offered so many opportunities, and in which science played a highly important role. There should be greater interaction between scientists and statesmen since, in the modern world, all policies should have a scientific foundation and be based on knowledge and experience in that area. As the Secretary-General's report (A/45/601) indicated, Governments and the scientific communities of many countries were carrying out commendable work in promoting an awareness of the lofty responsibility of science for the strengthening of international peace and security.

9. The scientists of the Ukrainian SSR were also contributing to that work and were playing an important role in their own country. As a result of the accident at Chernobyl, scientists and the entire population had experienced at first hand the terrible effects of a nuclear disaster. In 1990, the Ukraine had observed Chernobyl Week and had carried out many related activities with the broad participation of the international community.

10. The United Nations was doing useful work to stimulate and co-ordinate co-operation among States with a view to consolidating a safe world in which the nuclear threat did not exist. The Organization had held various conferences which had contributed to the understanding of the need to guide scientific and technical progress in such a way that it led to peace, enhanced the quality of life, prevented an ecological catastrophe and solved such acute problems as hunger, underdevelopment and epidemics. Despite all the progress which had been achieved, the United Nations should redouble its efforts to mobilize the entire international community in that regard. The Ukrainian SSR reiterated its readiness to co-operate with the United Nations in that important area, and for that reason it had joined the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.11, which it hoped would be adopted without a vote.

11. Mr. POUKRE-KONO (Central African Republic) said that, at a time of greater rapprochement among countries as a consequence of détente and the end of the cold war, and when scientific and technological progress had reached an unprecedented level which could jeopardize the balance of peace, the international community should pay greater attention to the relationship between science and peace.

12. Science had contributed to the socio-economic growth of States, which was indispensable for the promotion of peace. Although science and technology should serve mankind, certain States and persons, guided by security considerations, forgot about their civic duty. It was a matter of concern that, despite progress in the area of disarmament, new kinds of weapons continued to be produced. Nevertheless, despite certain persistent shortcomings, he noted with satisfaction that science and technology had been used principally for peaceful purposes.

13. All countries, both large and small, had a moral responsibility to conduct their national and international affairs in a way which would contribute to the promotion of peace and, in that regard, there was a need for greater international solidarity capable of generating a new dynamic of prosperity and development for all on an equal basis. Mankind was confronted with serious problems, such as the effects of ionizing radiation, pollution, depletion of the ozone layer and global warming, the destruction of fauna and flora, the consequences of the spillage of hazardous wastes and other natural disasters. The future of the world would depend on the solution of such problems, for which it would be necessary to rely on the international solidarity of the scientific community. Fortunately, mankind possessed the essential information for achieving equitable and lasting co-operation in the field of science and technology.

14. The United Nations played an important role in the solution of questions related to peace, and the proclamation of the International Week of Science and Peace demonstrated the Organization's concerns in that area. In 1986, the Central African Republic had observed the International Year of Peace, which was evidence of its support for the ideals of peace underlying its domestic and foreign policies. Aware of what scientific and technological progress could contribute to the development of a country, the Central African Republic had established the Grand Prix André Colingba in the field of science and technology, as an incentive for researchers and students.

15. The specialized agencies of the United Nations had made important contributions to the social and economic growth of the Central African Republic. In addition to multisectoral consultations, seminars and lectures had been held in order to make the population aware of current issues. In that regard, the conference on environment and sustainable development, which had led to the decision to establish a national committee for the environment, was worthy of note.

16. During the International Week of Science and Peace, many activities had been carried out in various parts of the world, which demonstrated that many countries advocated the use of science and technology for peaceful purposes. Nevertheless, the United Nations should continue to promote States' awareness of the need to observe the International Week of Science and Peace on an annual basis.

17. Mr. DONG Jianglong (China) stressed the importance of General Assembly resolution 43/61 in promoting broad participation in the discussion on science and peace, the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of social and economic development. While modern science and technology had improved the quality of human life, it had also brought misery to mankind. About one quarter of the world's total resources went to military research, which jeopardized social and economic stability. In the light of the favourable international climate and the growing interdependence of the world economy, deliberations on science and peace should be made more substantial and precise. Of course, it would be important to determine how to use those resources to solve the most pressing international problems so that science and technology could contribute to peace and balanced development.

18. In China, where both scientists and the population at large firmly believed in peace, many activities had been carried out in accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/61, including a national seminar on the contribution of scientific and technological personnel to peace and the modernization of the country. China was convinced that the strengthening of scientific co-operation would facilitate social and economic development and contribute to international peace.

19. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji, India, Jamaica, Liberia and Namibia had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.11 and that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

20. Draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.11 was adopted without a vote.

AGENDA ITEM 73: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/45/20 and 589)

21. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to begin its consideration of agenda item 73 and drew attention to the reports in documents A/45/20 and A/45/589. He noted that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was the focal point for international co-operation in that area and that its work was of great importance for the activities of the United Nations. The United Nations had served as a framework for the elaboration and adoption of a number of international legal instruments on outer space.

22. The lessening of East-West and North-South tensions had created an international climate conducive to fostering co-operation in one of the most dynamic branches of high technology. That was reflected in the Committee's recent achievements, such as the elaboration of draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and its decision to request the Legal Sub-Committee to consider a new item. The General Assembly had proclaimed 1992 as International Space Year and the necessary preparations were proceeding according to schedule. The Committee had urged Member States and international organizations to support more scientific and technical activities in co-operation with the United Nations and to increase their voluntary contributions within the framework of the

(The Chairman)

United Nations Programme on Space Applications. The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, for its part, had taken measures to make the benefits of space technology accessible to all Member States by implementing the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

23. Mr. MUNTEANU (Romania), speaking as Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, introduced that Committee's report on behalf of its Chairman and said that the Committee had achieved progress in its efforts to capitalize on the opportunities provided by rapid advances in space technology. The Committee's work had been largely focused on four main areas: ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes; the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee on the work of its twenty-seventh session; the report of the Legal Sub-Committee on the work of its twenty-ninth session; and spin-off benefits of space technology.

24. With regard to the first item, the Committee had once again stressed the importance of the work carried out in order to maintain outer space for peaceful purposes and reaffirmed its conviction that current developments would strengthen that role. Member States highlighted the fact that the Committee was empowered to strengthen the international bases for the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

25. Referring to the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, he said that the Committee had endorsed the programme of activities for 1991 and, at the same time, had expressed its appreciation to a number of Governments and institutions for assistance, including financial assistance, provided for holding workshops, training courses and meetings of experts. It had also noted with satisfaction that 1990 had witnessed progress in the implementation of the Programme, but had drawn attention to the Committee's limited resources and had requested the allocation of more resources so that the Programme's activities could be implemented. Having noted that many recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had not been fully implemented, the Working Group of the Whole had formulated several specific proposals. The Committee, for its part, had also recommended the reconvening of the Working Group of the Whole in 1991 so that its work could be continued. The Committee had noted with great satisfaction that the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space had reached agreement on the matter and that its recommendations had provided the basis for agreement in the relevant working group of the Legal Sub-Committee on a draft principle relating to guidelines and criteria for the safe use of such sources. It had recommended that the item should be retained on the Sub-Committee's agenda and that the Working Group should be reconvened at the thirtieth session of the Sub-Committee. With regard to the question of co-ordination, the Committee had reiterated its appreciation to the representatives of United Nations bodies and agencies and other international organizations for their participation in all stages of its work and for the reports submitted, which could be helpful to the Committee in carrying out its work as a focal point for international co-operation in that area, especially with respect to

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

the practical applications of space science and technology in developing countries. Concerning matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellites, the Committee had endorsed a Sub-Committee recommendation that the discussion on remote-sensing activities should be continued at its twenty-eighth session, in accordance with the principles set forth in General Assembly resolution 41/65. The Committee had noted recent achievements in the field of space transportation systems and had recommended the retention of the item on the agenda. It had also recommended retaining the items entitled "Matters relating to life sciences, including space medicine", "Progress in national and international space activities related to the Earth environment, in particular progress in the geosphere-biosphere (global change) programme", "Matters relating to planetary exploration" and "Matters relating to astronomy". The Committee had also pointed to the lack of progress on the question of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit. With regard to the theme recommended for special attention at the 1991 session of the Sub-Committee, "Applications of airborne and satellite remote sensing for prospecting mineral and ground-water resources and for monitoring and managing biological resources, with emphasis on agriculture, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries", the Committee had endorsed the recommendation and the request that the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) should be invited to hold a symposium on that theme. Mention should be made of the generous support given by those bodies to the Sub-Committee and the symposium they had conducted on the 1990 theme, "The use of space technology in terrestrial search and rescue and in disaster relief activities". In that regard, special mention should be made of the presentation on the Spacebridge which had connected medical centres in the United States with Armenia, following the earthquake, and with Ufa, following the train accident which had occurred there. The Committee had also considered the question of declaring 1992 as International Space Year. It had recalled the Assembly's endorsement of the recommendation that the training and educational capabilities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications should be utilized so that the Organization could play an important role, through voluntary contributions by Member States and without any impact on the regular budget of the United Nations or the Programme's schedule of work. States had agreed that the Year provided an opportunity to strengthen and expand international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space and had noted the importance of including all countries in activities. Those activities included the World Space Congress, to be organized jointly by COSPAR and IAF in Washington, D.C., and a more far-reaching programme on the "Mission to Planet Earth", which would emphasize the participation of all countries, particularly the developing countries. The Committee had also noted the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was planned for 1992 and had endorsed the recommendation of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee that Member States, in planning their activities for the Year, should consider ways in which those activities could complement activities already under way for the Conference.

26. Referring to the work of the Legal Sub-Committee, he said that progress continued in the elaboration of draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. The Working Group on that item had been

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

re-established under the chairmanship of Mr. H. Winkler of Austria. The Committee had welcomed the consensus reached on the text of draft principle 3, relating to guidelines and criteria for safe use. Complying with a recommendation by the Sub-Committee, an informal meeting and further consultations had been held, resulting in some progress, in particular on draft principles 9 and 12. The bases for consensus in the near future on the text of draft principle 8 and the deletion of draft principle 11 had also been established. It was to be hoped that, in the near future, an agreement could be reached on draft principle 2 on notification of the presence on board a space object of a nuclear power source and draft principle 4 on safety assessment. No concrete results had been achieved in the definition and delimitation of outer space and the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit. The Sub-Committee had had before it for the second year the item entitled "Consideration of the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries". It had established a Working Group which would meet during its thirtieth session.

27. With regard to the topic "Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status", the Committee had agreed that spin-offs were yielding substantial benefits in many fields, such as medicine, manufacturing and construction, art preservation, environmental protection and agriculture. The Committee had noted the importance of international co-operation in developing spin-off benefits, particularly those which could address the social and economic needs of developing countries. The Committee had recommended that space agencies should consider the allocation of a small portion of their resources to encourage spin-off applications of space technology through technology transfer and the exchange of technical information on promotional terms with developing countries.

28. The Committee had granted permanent observer status to the International Law Association and the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, and had agreed that, in the future, non-governmental organizations which requested observer status should have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and be concerned with matters falling within the competence of the Committee.

29. The new era of international détente could not help but be reflected in the work of the Committee. However, while much attention had been focused on changes in East-West relations, it should be remembered that a need for economic and social development remained in the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Committee, in co-operation with other international and regional organizations, would continue to work towards strengthening and expanding co-operation so that space activities could benefit all countries.

30. Mr. FREUDENSCHUSS (Austria) said that, given the auspicious international climate in general and the increasing co-operation between the super-Powers in particular, further progress should be possible with regard to ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Freudenschuss, Austria)

31. With regard to the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, there was a growing interest in matters relating to the space and earth environment and to the agreement reached in the Committee that space debris could be an appropriate subject for discussion in the future. Likewise, note should be taken of the recommendation of the Working Group of the Whole on the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space that regional centres should be established for space science and technology education.

32. The Legal Sub-Committee had made progress in elaborating the draft principles on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, reached a consensus on draft principle 3 and laid the bases for a future consensus with regard to draft principle 8 and to the deletion of draft principle 11. As Chairman of the Working Group of the Whole, he felt that a final effort was required in order to conclude its work, and he hoped that the set of draft principles would be adopted at the next meeting of the Committee, in Graz, Austria. With regard to the new item of the Sub-Committee, the time had come to consider it specifically and in greater detail within the framework of the newly formed working group.

33. Mr. SUN Lin (China) said that the progress achieved in space science and technology and in international co-operation in outer space activities had resulted in economic and social benefits for all States. The United Nations had made valuable contributions in that regard by organizing training programmes, seminars and workshops and by providing all kinds of advisory services to developing countries.

34. As part of its process of reform and opening to the outside world, his country attached great importance to the development of space technology and the promotion of its applications. Since the launching of its first satellite, China had placed 29 satellites in orbit, including recoverable remote-sensing, communications and meteorological satellites. In 1990, China's activities in the communications field had produced especially encouraging results, such as the use of commercial satellite services, the connection of a television earth station to the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT), which had ensured the broadcasting of information on the XI Asian Olympic Games, and the progress made in the construction of rockets capable of launching heavy satellites. In meteorology, note should be taken of the successful launching of an experimental satellite entirely designed and produced in China, which was sending information not only to that country but around the world. China attached great importance to the strengthening of international co-operation within the United Nations system and had conducted various seminars and workshops; in 1991 it would offer two one-year fellowships.

35. He noted with satisfaction the progress achieved during the informal consultations on the question of nuclear power sources. In his delegation's view, draft principles 2 and 4 were interrelated, although their content was very different. With regard to the definition of launching States in draft principle 9, he felt that, owing to the complexity of the question, a more feasible way of

(Mr. Sun Lin, China)

defining the rights and obligations of all parties would be to define the role of the launching States in the light of the specific situation surrounding each clause, on the basis of the current text.

36. The activities of the International Space Year would promote the development of space science and technology and international co-operation in that field. His country firmly supported the activities of the Year and had established a preparatory committee for that purpose. It was willing to promote exchanges and co-operation with other States so that space exploration and the peaceful uses of outer space would serve the interests of all mankind.

37. Mr. TRAXLER (Italy), speaking on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community, said that on the basis of the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, the Committee had elaborated a number of fundamental international legal instruments which had received the continuous support, individual and collective, of the Twelve through the European Space Agency (ESA); the latter currently had 13 member States, nine of which belonged to the Community.

38. The Twelve welcomed the initiative taken by various international scientific organizations of designating 1992 as the International Space Year and the recommendation made by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/46, paragraph 21, that international co-operation should be promoted through the Year for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries.

39. He noted with satisfaction the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee during its twenty-seventh session, particularly with regard to the agreement reached on scientific and technical criteria for the safe use of nuclear power sources, its contributions to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

40. Note should also be taken of the work of the Legal Sub-Committee, which had again considered, and would continue considering in 1991 through its working group, the new agenda item concerning the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries.

41. The increasingly serious problem of space debris had also drawn the attention of the Twelve, some of which had submitted proposals suggesting the need for a better understanding of its scientific aspects and technical implications if it was really to be solved. The Twelve also agreed with the international community that outer space should continue to be used for peaceful purposes and reiterated their view that resolutions aimed at avoiding the extension of the arms race to outer space fell not within the competence of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

Space but within the competence of other organizations of the United Nations system. Lastly, the Twelve welcomed the spirit of consensus which had prevailed in the deliberations of the Committee and would contribute actively to the strengthening of international co-operation for peaceful purposes in outer space.

42. Mr. TIROL (Philippines) said that his country, a signatory to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, was committed to those activities being carried out for the benefit of all peoples. The world must set aside its last frontier for preserving peace, and the militarization of outer space was thus unacceptable, especially as the cold war had ended.

43. The abandonment of ideologies offered innumerable opportunities for co-operation and was an impetus to the development of space law. The Philippines was heartened that the Working Group of the Legal Sub-Committee would continue to consider at its next session the legal aspects of applying the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, with particular account given to the needs of developing countries.

44. The development of a suitable legal framework would allow nations like the Philippines to gain access to outer space, which they needed in order to move ahead in telecommunications, remote sensing and meteorology. His delegation therefore attached great importance to speedy implementation of the decisions of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82) and considered that the United Nations Programme on Space Applications was fundamental for the developing countries. Despite its meagre resources, the Programme had done very important work; the International Space Information Service had issued many interesting publications.

45. Remote sensing was of major interest to the Philippines. Access to data was dependent on ground receiving stations, which must be transformed into a network of stations interconnected and interrelated by wire or radio links. Research was needed to determine whether telecommunication facilities could be used for secondary reception of data from the nearest ground receiving station.

46. His delegation viewed with concern the negative impact on developing countries of the commercialization of remote sensing. It would like to see costs become more affordable and a continuous data supply ensured. As a first step, satellite owners should not impose flat rates, but should charge reception fees based on the volume of data received. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the compatibility and complementarity of existing ground receiving stations so that they would not have to be adapted to new systems.

47. He shared the international concern over the hazard to humanity and the environment of the unplanned re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere of malfunctioning space objects with nuclear power sources on board. Consequently, his delegation was pleased that substantial progress had been made in addressing that subject and

(Mr. Tirol, Philippines)

that a consensus had been reached on principles for ensuring the safe use of those sources and on the establishment of protective measures for launching States.

48. He took the view that the geostationary orbit, a limited natural resource, was the heritage of mankind and that its rational utilization and accessibility for all must be strictly governed by space law.

49. He was pleased to note that international co-operation would be promoted and space technology used to study the Earth's environment during the International Space Year of 1992. Science and technology possessed immense power, which must be used to increase production, improve the quality of life of all human beings and, ultimately, solve many of the problems facing the world.

50. Mr. MAYORSKIY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the new international economic order, which of course concerned outer space, had come about as a consequence of an equally new political way of thinking. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), a permanent body established to study practical and feasible means in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1472 (A) XIV of 12 December 1959, bore enormous responsibility for dealing with questions currently of vital importance for humanity.

51. COPUOS had been one of the first to rely on a consensus for adopting decisions, a principle already 30 years old. During the period of confrontation, the Committee had had to proceed gingerly in exploring areas of mutual agreement and in maintaining them for a long time as a kind of warning device which, if ignored, could ruin the consensus. A tradition had thus been created that continued to be shouldered by all, although confrontation was a thing of the past.

52. The Soviet Union was in favour of strengthening consensus in the work of COPUOS and called on all delegations to consider measures that might be taken to enhance that Committee's authority, broaden its horizons and strengthen its capacity to act. An objective analysis of the report before the Special Political Committee showed that study of those measures held an insignificant place in the programmes sponsored by the United Nations. There was no doubt that more productive joint efforts could be made in that direction; the preparations for International Space Year should further that aim.

53. It would be no exaggeration to say that the initiative of the non-governmental organizations, approved and supported by the General Assembly, went beyond the original modest framework and continued to grow in importance for everyone. At its thirty-third session, COPUOS had urged all countries to join actively in preparing International Space Year. The Soviet Union supported that call and welcomed the Committee's recommendation that the use of outer space to resolve environment problems should be at the centre of the preparations. It was symbolic that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development would be held in 1992, the year which had been proclaimed International Space Year.

(Mr. Mayorskiy, USSR)

54. Through its Ministry of General Mechanical Engineering and its Academy of Sciences, his country had established a national committee for the preparation and observance of International Space Year. As a result, a national programme had been elaborated which included an international conference on outer space and the problems confronting mankind on the threshold of the twenty-first century, a symposium on management of the Earth and geoecology from outer space, an international gathering of young astronauts, scientists and experts on the peaceful conquest of space, and an international conference on Earth from outer space, devoted to remote-sensing issues. Also during International Space Year, the specialized environmental module Priroda would be launched and would dock with the Mir orbital station to carry out scientific experiments proposed by researchers from developing countries, as well as other interesting projects at the disposal of the programme.

55. In the search for ways and means to preserve outer space for peaceful purposes, it was necessary to eliminate confrontation and to delve into problems without preconceptions. Logically that was linked to the prevention of the arms race in outer space, an issue which was a concern of the Conference on Disarmament. He emphasized that the Soviet Union would not tolerate the use of outer space as a stage for military rivalries.

56. After acknowledging the special and unique mandates of the Conference on Disarmament, he noted that preservation of outer space for peaceful purposes did not stop with disarmament and that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should pronounce itself with the utmost clarity on that point. He urged practical and friendly co-operation between the Conference and the Committee for the benefit of all, but without prejudice to their individual prerogatives. The Committee could offer expert conclusions and information on confidence-building measures and on the legal aspects of the question, with a view to ensuring the safety of activities conducted in outer space.

57. The Legal Sub-Committee was about to conclude the elaboration of draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. During its 1990 session agreements had been reached on related safety criteria. The Sub-Committee had established a new Working Group to consider the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries. The Working Group had held an exchange of often contradictory and nearly always trenchant views, to a point where some delegations had felt that some highly polemic issues should be set aside and that the Group should turn to other matters.

58. As to events in his country, the Mir was still in orbit and, after being unoccupied for a short period, was being used again manned by crews of space researchers. In December 1989, the large Kvant 2 module had docked up with it, as had the Cristal technological module in June 1990, designed to link up with the special multipurpose Buran spaceship to conduct experiments on the production of

(Mr. Mayorskiy, USSR)

semi-conducting materials and biological substances. That space laboratory, several stories high, was manned by crews in rotation who carried out extravehicular manoeuvres, repaired cargo vehicles such as the TM-9 and conducted various experiments in the Cristal module's furnaces, which already had produced 3 kilograms of finished material.

59. The eighth crew was expected to arrive in the first two weeks of December 1990 to carry out the Cosmoreporter international project. A Japanese journalist was to undertake a special eight-day flight and would transmit data using SONY video equipment. Later on, eight cosmonauts from Austria, France and Germany would be travelling to the Mir station.

60. Furthermore, in December 1989 the Granat 1 astrophysics laboratory had been launched as part of an international project of the same name, in which scientists from Bulgaria, France and Denmark were participating using instruments provided by those countries. The purpose of that project was to conduct research on X- and gamma-ray sources in space.

61. After describing the Interbol and Spektr-Rentgen-Gamma projects in detail, he focused on the Mars-94 project on which his country was co-operating with some 20 others. Another important project was Radio-Astron, being carried out by nine countries and a European consortium of radio astronomers to establish a space and ground radiointerferometry system for research on celestial bodies.

62. February 1990 had witnessed the launching of the Nadezhda satellite, which carried navigational equipment for ship and air search and rescue missions, as well as the recovery from Mir of the first commercial payload in the history of his country's space travel, financed by a United States firm to establish a link between weightlessness and the formation of protein crystals.

63. During 1989 the legal foundation for the participation of his country in the exploration of outer space had been broadened and bilateral agreements had been signed with the European Space Agency, China and Argentina. During the years of perestroika, successes and failures and technical and scientific errors, as well as the financial aspects of programmes, had been evaluated more thoroughly. New projects and programmes were subjected to rigorous critical analysis from the standpoint of their political, economic, technical and scientific merits, outmoded views were permanently altered, and romantic notions about the conquest of space were totally rejected. Furthermore, the policy of openness ushered in by glasnost had also been extended to the field of outer space, and national and world public opnion could assess the efficiency and usefulness of the country's efforts in that field. Moreover, his country's scientific community enjoyed increasing independence and autonomy and was able to establish contacts and reach international agreements directly. Those new developments helped to rationalize his country's space activities and provided a further stimulus to increased co-operation with other States for the benefit of all mankind.

OTHER MATTERS

64. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that document A/SPC/45/L.10 contained a letter from him, dated 7 November 1990, addressed to the President of the General Assembly transmitting a letter to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee concerning programme planning. Subsequently, he had received a letter dated 13 November 1990 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations presenting the views of his delegation on the subject, which had been transmitted to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee and would be issued as document A/SPC/45/L.10/Add.1.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
14th meeting
held on
Thursday, 15 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda)

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AGENDA ITEM 73: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 73: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued) (A/45/20, A/45/589)

1. Mr. GONZALEZ (Chile) reiterated his delegation's opinion that space activities should benefit mankind and should take place within the conceptual framework of mankind's common heritage. It was necessary to promote international co-operation in outer space and to preserve it for future generations. As the Group of 77 had indicated, that co-operation should be marked by transgenerational equity.

2. The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, which was the written expression of international development law and the fundamental frame of reference for space law, called for the non-reciprocal preferential treatment of developing countries. Fittingly, space law itself provided that space activities should be carried out for the benefit of all peoples, whatever their level of development.

3. International organizations provided the necessary framework for obligating the Member States to work together to reach the aforementioned goals. For those ideas to be politically viable, it was necessary for them to play an active role in that area. His delegation therefore welcomed the decision of the General Assembly to include a new item in the agenda of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and to establish a working group on that item, which marked the beginning of a new phase in the progressive development of space law. The item was a modified version of article I of the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, and it very clearly expressed the doctrine of modern international development or co-operation law as a factor that should benefit present and future generations. It was the key concept for putting the benefits of space activities to work for the entire international community.

4. Now was not the time to go into details. However, it was important at least to establish that although technology could be appropriated, science should be considered res communis. The principle of non-reciprocal preferential assistance to developing countries was of crucial importance in that context, but it would only go from the status of guideline to that of a general principle of co-operation law when it was spelled out in specific norms whose enforcement was subject to international control. The United Nations could play an important role in the progressive development of space law, and every effort should be made to continue to move ahead in that area. The deterioration of the environment, terrorism, drug trafficking and other global problems had led to the increasing interdependence of all countries and had given rise to a body of incipient rights that might be called rights of mankind. The international community was witnessing a veritable revolution in legal science, which was expressed as a transnational right and made it necessary to reconcile different interests for the benefit of all mankind.

5. However, opposing perceptions and strategic interests made it difficult to achieve major breakthroughs, a problem which particularly affected the interests of developing countries. For example, with respect to the geostationary orbit,

(Mr. Gonzalez, Chile)

despite the efforts of developing countries to be flexible in their positions and to look for compromise solutions, the technological Powers still refused to accept regulation of the orbital segment. It had also been impossible to reach minimum agreements with respect to the militarization of outer space. It was appropriate to mention a few aspects of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/45/20), in particular paragraph 20, which mentioned the need for legal mechanisms to prevent an escalation of the arms race. One possible step would be to draw up an interpretive protocol to article IV of the 1967 Treaty that would fill its legal gaps and would expand it to cover all types of arms. His delegation still thought that there should be a clearer relationship between COPUOS and the negotiations supposedly being conducted within the Ad Hoc Committee responsible for studying item 5 of the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

6. His delegation also believed that the format of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had been weakened, thereby depleting its substance, and wished to take advantage of the present opportunity expressly to request the review of its methods of work. It was concerned by the lack of concrete results of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82), and it reiterated its support for the decision of the General Assembly to designate 1992 as International Space Year. The Year would be highly political, and the developing countries hoped that it would not result in frustrated expectations, as in the case of the Conference.

7. Mr. BUGTI (Pakistan) said that, as the common heritage of mankind, outer space should be used to promote the development of all nations equally and should not be militarized, which meant that the relevant international instruments must be strictly enforced. In that context, it was necessary to strengthen the 1967 Treaty, and his delegation favoured a comprehensive convention that would prevent an arms race in outer space. Special attention should be devoted to banning and dismantling anti-satellite weapons and ballistic missile defence systems. COPUOS should continue to consider the question of how to reserve outer space for peaceful uses.

8. His country had been making modest contributions to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications since 1984. The Programme had an important role to play and should be strengthened so that a substantive programme of assistance and technology transfer to developing countries could be developed. It was unfortunate that the Programme still did not have sufficient financial support from Member States. His delegation agreed with the suggestion that the activities celebrating International Space Year should demonstrate that space research and development was responsive to social and economic needs. In that context, COPUOS should take the lead in developing a framework to ensure the equitable distribution of the benefits of outer space activities.

9. The international community was greatly concerned by the unchecked growth of the amount of debris in outer space, which was becoming a serious safety hazard in space and a threat to its use. That topic should be included as an item in the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

(Mr. Bugti, Pakistan)

10. The international community was also concerned by the increasing impact of commercial considerations on remote sensing activities and by the rising cost of remote sensing services. The United Nations should continue to promote free access to remote sensing data satellites and should attempt to ensure the continuity of transmitting characteristics between various remote sensing satellite systems in order to avoid premature obsolescence of existing ground facilities. For their part, satellite operating States should substantially reduce their prices and access fees.

11. Space technology was being increasingly used in developing countries, particularly in areas such as communication, earth resource surveys, position mapping, search and rescue operations and data collection and relay. Under Pakistan's space programme, in July 1990, the first experimental satellite, Badr-A, had been launched on board a Chinese launch vehicle; work on the design concept of a more up-to-date model of that satellite, Badr-B, had been started; and a ground station had been established for direct acquisition of data from the United States land satellite Landsat and the French Spot satellite. It was very necessary to ensure the equitable and just access of all States to the geostationary orbit, without prejudice to the role of the International Telecommuncation Union (ITU). That would require that preferential treatment should be granted to developing countries.

12. Mr. KHANI (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, on account of the work done by the COPUOS, irrespective of their level of development, countries were enjoying the benefits of the progress made in science and technology. He welcomed the advances made in space activities but pointed out that such progress had mostly benefited a small number of industrialized countries that had space technology, whereas the majority of the developing countries were far from making use of those advances, which could help them to solve their development problems. He hoped that international co-operation, in the form of technical and financial assistance, would help the developing countries to improve their space capacity. Assistance should be given to the developing countries in remote sensing and in training technicians in that and other disciplines such as data processing and space photography. Lastly, the utilization of outer space should be reserved exclusively for peaceful purposes, and space activities should be conducted for the benefit of all States, particularly the developing countries, in a spirit of co-operation, which would protect the legitimate interests of all peoples and ensure respect for their sovereignty.

13. Mr. NOREEN (Sweden) said that he was satisfied with the results achieved during the past year, especially in the field of nuclear power sources in outer space. He mentioned, in particular, the agreement reached on recommendations for the safe use of nuclear power sources in outer space, in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and in the Legal Sub-Committee, and also the agreement on draft principle 3 relating to guidelines and criteria for safe use. An agreement on draft principle 2 relating to notification of the presence on board a space object of a nuclear power source and draft principle 4 relating to assessment would be more difficult to achieve. His country supported the idea of making safety

(Mr. Noreen, Sweden)

assessments publicly available and also prior to each launch, as that would provide a practical solution to the problem of notification.

14. Satellite remote sensing was of fundamental importance for monitoring the Earth's environment and in particular for studying and monitoring global change. Remote sensing was going to play a central role in the activities proposed for International Space Year, the theme of which was "Mission to Planet Earth". In those activities, special emphasis would be placed on the use of space technology for studying and monitoring the environment. Similarly, remote sensing was likely to be an essential issue at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. The training and educational capabilities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications would be utilized to highlight the meaningful role of the United Nations. In support of that programme, Sweden had held the first United Nations training course on remote sensing education for educators and was prepared to repeat the course in 1992 as part of the International Space Year activities. In his delegation's view, the question of remote sensing should continue to be a priority item on the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

15. Concerning space debris, he said that COPUOS had agreed that it could be an appropriate subject for discussion in the future. Sweden continued to believe that the question of outer space environment should be kept on the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. The countries with major space capabilities should assume a special responsibility since they were the ones most immediately affected by the growing amount of space debris.

16. Mr. POSSO SERRANO (Ecuador) said that the international community had an obligation to promote the use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes and to prevent the use of space solely for the benefit of certain States which had technological and scientific resources. International co-operation and solidarity were imperative in order for Ecuador to gain access to those resources and offer them to its people. The main obstacle to such access was the fact that science and technology were being continually used for massive destruction and to promote preparation for war. The States with the greatest scientific and technological capability were responsible for putting science to such use, and the Organization should redouble its efforts to promote international co-operation for the benefit of mankind. In that connection, the work being done by COPUOS and its Sub-Committees was truly commendable, but much remained to be done to increase space activities in the world, especially in the developing countries.

17. His delegation was in favour of the Working Group continuing to discuss the subject of the exploration and utilization of outer space for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of the developing countries. His delegation also felt that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should intensify its work on topics fundamental to international co-operation, such as remote sensing satellites, space transportation, space medicine, planetary exploration, studies of the biosphere and the conservation and protection of outer space. The chapter on the synchronic geostationary orbit was

(Mr. Posso Serrano, Ecuador)

of especial importance to Ecuador, because it had the particular feature of being a limited and non-renewable resource.

18. Ecuador repeated its position that the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, did not even mention it and that a special legal instrument was, therefore, needed to end the present exploitation by States to the exclusion of the rights of other States. Such exploitation was irresponsible and irrational not only because it took no account of the interests of all countries but because it actually prevented access to the orbit owing to the virtual saturation of the resource. Ecuador was therefore proposing a legal régime based on equity and oriented towards international co-operation so as to ensure that the geostationary orbit would be used for the benefit of all mankind. Such a régime should be discussed by the Legal Sub-Committee and not by the International Telecommunication Union. The main questions at issue were the recognition of the interests and special rights of the developing countries, particularly equatorial countries and the real opportunities for those countries to accede to the synchronic geostationary orbit. Of particular importance was the appropriate use of the range of frequencies.

19. Mr. QUINTANA (Spain) fully supported the statement made by the representative of Italy on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community but added that he would like to make certain observations on behalf of his delegation.

20. Spain had always considered international co-operation to be an essential component of scientific research and other activities related to the peaceful uses of outer space. Upon being appointed a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Spain had agreed to alternate with Portugal every three years as a member of the Committee. In recent years Spain's situation had changed drastically. In 1990, over $300 million had been invested in various space programmes, making Spain the tenth largest spender in that area. His delegation hoped that Spain's current status in the Committee would be re-examined in the near future, so that it might become a full member without having to alternate with any other member of the Committee.

21. As had been stated on other occasions, one way of reducing the gap between the developed and the developing countries would be by giving a co-ordinating and integrating role to those nations situated in zones of intermediate development. That would require considerable efforts as well as the support of the international organizations through which co-operative activities between States were promoted and channelled.

22. In 1988 a meeting of experts had been held in Maspalomas in the Canary Islands, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/56. Some of the recommendations from that meeting had already been incorporated in the United Nations programme for 1992. The programme established that Maspalomas would be the venue the Third United Nations/FAO/ESA Workshop on Microwave Remote Sensing Technology, for the benefit of Member States in the ECA and ESCWA regions,

(Mr. Quintana, Spain)

scheduled for June 1991. Spanish scientists would take an active part in the organization of that workshop. Maspalomas would also feature in the process, to be completed in 1991, of bringing Spain into the COSPAS-SARSAT system. That would give the international community the necessary facilities to detect radio beacon signals from the Atlantic zone between the Iberian peninsula and the equator, which was currently not covered. In 1990 Spain had taken part in the Space Conference of the Americas: "Prospects of co-operation for development", which had been held in Costa Rica under the auspices of the United Nations. It had also taken part in the United Nations workshop on space communications for development, organized in Cuba for the benefit of Member States in the region of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), at which it had presented the HISPASAT programme, aimed at establishing a space communications system between Spain and Latin America.

23. In 1992, which would mark the fifth centenary of the discovery of America, a major international EXPO would be held in Seville and the Olympic Games would be held in Barcelona. He was pleased to announce that a pavilion at the Seville EXPO would be devoted to the promotion and dissemination of activities related to the peaceful uses of outer space.

24. Mr. AZIKIWE (Nigeria) said that Nigeria's interest and active participation in international forums on international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space was based on the following fundamental principles and objectives: (1) outer space was the common heritage of mankind, with no defined frontiers and collective efforts were therefore needed to ensure that its exploration was exclusively peaceful; (2) space exploration and the maintenance of international peace and security were closely linked, and the developing countries had no means of monitoring activities in outer space; and (3) the exploration of space had opened wide opportunities for humanitarian initiatives.

25. In 1959 the General Assembly had established the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which had given increasingly convincing justification of its existence through its efforts to extend the benefits of space activities to all nations, irrespective of their level of development. Much remained to be done, however, not only to make space activities genuinely peaceful and secure, but also to ensure the fair distribution of the benefits which accrued from them.

26. The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which had been signed on 27 January 1967 and which Nigeria had acceded to on 14 November 1967, remained the corner-stone of the international juridical régime governing space exploration. It should, however, be recognized that in 1967 no one could have foreseen the enormous technological advances of recent years, nor the more recent and momentous changes in international politics.

27. In the current climate of reduced world tension, Nigeria was pleased to note that at its twenty-seventh session the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had reached consensus on scientific and technical guidelines for the use of

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

nuclear-power sources in outer space and had elaborated important safety standards on radiation, on the design, use and disposal of nuclear reactors and on isotope generators on satellites and other space objects.

28. The Legal Sub-Committee had reached a consensus agreement on the draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear-power sources in outer space, based on recommendations of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

29. While the retention of outer space for peaceful uses necessitated the active co-operation of all States, it was the space Powers which bore the greatest responsibility in that undertaking. The design, launch and operation of space-bound satellites must conform to the strictest standards of safety, environmental pollution must be reduced and the exposure of people to radiation must be eliminated.

30. Outer space itself must be clearly defined and delimited, necessary information about the launching or malfunction of space objects must be provided to the United Nations in a timely manner, adequate, prompt and just compensation must be paid to the victims of accidental crashes and steps must be taken to prevent future disasters in space and on Earth resulting from the accidental accumulation or deliberate dumping of space debris.

31. In any event, the spin-off benefits of space technology were already having an impact not only on national and international communication systems, life sciences, space medicine, astronomy and remote sensing but also on urban planning, natural resource exploration, deforestation, bush-fire fighting, hydrology and climate change. They were thus affecting the quality of life of millions of people throughout the world, for they could help to mitigate hunger, socio-economic hardships and natural disasters.

32. Consideration of the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of the developing countries, was of fundamental importance for countries like Nigeria. The space Powers must demonstrate in practice how they could extend the benefits of the conquest of space to all countries, particularly the developing countries. It was obvious that the unequal access of the developing countries to space science and technology was a result of the gap between them and the developed countries in scientific, technological and economic development; that gap must be closed.

33. His country recommended that emphasis should be given to the following key priorities and objectives: the establishment of an international framework for the conscious development of indigenous manpower and capability in science and technology in the developing countries; the institutionalization of the exchange of information, materials and equipment and the establishment of joint ventures by the space Powers and the developing countries; the establishment of an international framework to provide easy and cheap access to remote-sensing data, ground receiving

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

stations and digital image processing systems; the creation of an international fund to help to accelerate the development of national infrastructures, promote the transfer and acquisition of space technology, and train specialized technical personnel in the developing countries; and the establishment of an appropriate framework for the effective and equitable distribution of the spin-off benefits of space science and technology.

34. Lastly, his delegation maintained that the consideration of the provisions of international and national law relating to international co-operation in outer space as a prior step to the formulation of proposals for increasing such co-operation must not be allowed to delay the start of effective practical work designed genuinely to take into account the interests of all countries, particularly the developing countries, whose national outer-space legislation was often, for understandable reasons, not the most appropriate.

35. Mr. KOUPRIAN (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the debate on the item was taking place in an atmosphere of co-operation which facilitated the search for compromise solutions, thereby demonstrating the goodwill generated in the international community by the favourable developments in international relations. The new political thinking which was gradually gaining ground facilitated the development of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space, a goal which would be attained only if the whole international community united its efforts for the benefit of mankind. Mention should be made of the role of the United Nations as a co-ordinating centre for the work of Member States in that sphere and of the need to continue to strengthen that important function.

36. His country wanted to take an active part in the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and the Group of Eastern European Countries had therefore proposed the Ukrainian SSR for the seat vacated by the German Democratic Republic after the reunification of Germany. His delegation hoped that the General Assembly would support its candidacy.

37. His country had the necessary potential and experience to engage in space exploration for peaceful purposes and it systematically informed the United Nations about the results of its work. Since 1962 it had been participating in programmes such as INTERCOSMOS and had collaborated in the launching of some 370 artificial satellites. During such activities Ukrainian scientists worked on the improvement of the satellites, the development of instruments for various tasks, the production of new chemical and pharmaceutical products, the use of new technologies to solve ecological problems, and the early detection of natural disasters. In 1989, when a typhoon was moving towards the United States, it was owing to information supplied by the Ukrainian SSR that appropriate defensive measures had been taken, demonstrating that such activities were useful to many countries. The Academy of Sciences was carrying out important work and served as a co-ordination centre for activities relating to the peaceful uses of outer space. In the field of space biology and medicine a valuable research project was being carried out in collaboration with France, the Netherlands and Norway which would be of great utility for the international community. Mention should also be made of the scientific work carried out in his country in collaboration with various countries of Eastern Europe and other States.

(Mr. Kouprian, Ukrainian SSR)

38. His delegation firmly supported the General Assembly's decision to designate 1992 as International Space Year. The implementation of the programme "Mission to Planet Earth" and the other activities of Member States would enable the international community to make progress in the study and use of outer space for the benefit of mankind.

39. Soviet experts and scientists were planning to hold an international symposium on problems of the effects of solar processes on the natural environment of the Earth and on human beings, and a conference was to be held in Kiev on outer space and mankind's problems in the twenty-first century. There would also be an international meeting on the problems of instrument construction in outer space and an international meeting of young scientists and Ukrainian experts engaged in space research. The Academy of Sciences might perhaps organize a seminar for experts from the developing countries, under the auspices of the United Nations, on new methods of remote sensing of the Earth. It was also willing to consider the possibility of offering post-graduate courses in outer space research and uses to specialists from the developing countries.

40. There was no doubt that the conquest of outer space required an era of peace and effective measures by the international community to prevent the militarization of outer space. It was important for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to approve by consensus recommendations on the search for ways and means of maintaining outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes, for that would help to increase the collaboration between COPUOS and the Conference on Disarmament.

41. His delegation reiterated its support for the creation of a world outer space organization to serve as a co-ordination centre for the peaceful uses of outer space, to collate results from all States, and to supervise the implementation of the international conventions on the non-militarization of outer space.

42. His delegation attached particular importance to the agreement reached by consensus at the twenty-ninth session of the Legal Sub-Committee on principles relevant to the use of nuclear-power sources in outer space in safe conditions. His country had suffered the tragedy of Chernobyl and it fully supported the views of the Working Group of the Legal Sub-Committee on the elaboration of draft principles relative to the use of nuclear-power sources in outer space. In that connection, it was important for the international principles governing protection against radiation to be strictly observed, in order to save mankind from a nuclear disaster.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
15th meeting
held on
Friday, 16 November 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. POSSO SERRANO (Ecuador)

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AGENDA ITEM 73: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)

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26 November 1990

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 73: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued) (A/45/20 and A/45/589; A/SPC/45/L.17)

1. Mr. FREUDENSCHUSS (Austria), introducing draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.17 on behalf of the Working Group on International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, stressed that it had been based on the input of a large number of delegations and hoped that it would be adopted without a vote.

2. Mr. ALZATE (Colombia) said it was a cause of concern to his delegation that the international norms applicable to outer space had not kept pace with the astounding advances in space technology. His delegation took the view that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) must be informed of progress made in the Conference on Disarmament, in particular with regard to the prevention of the spread of the arms race to outer space. Colombia disagreed with those delegations that sought to limit the Committee's competence to questions of a purely scientific and technical nature.

3. International co-operation on the peaceful uses of outer space must take into consideration the needs of the developing countries and the special geographical circumstances of certain States. The reports of the Committee should not be based solely on those areas in which it had been possible to reach a consensus; they should also reflect all exchanges of opinion, even when it had not been possible to reach an agreement, because that furthered the co-operation process.

4. His delegation took note with satisfaction of the preparation of a number of studies relating to the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82). It was to be hoped that appropriate measures would be taken to allocate financial resources for the implementation of those recommendations. Training must be improved so that developing countries could have better access to technical and legal information. His delegation was pleased that national officials and experts would be taken into account during the allocation of training programmes. Colombia expressed its gratitude to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and China for their fellowship offers for 1990-1991 and to other countries that had carried out activities in that area.

5. His delegation had given careful consideration to matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellites, a subject that had direct applications for developing countries. Such activities must be undertaken within a framework of international co-operation, bearing in mind the concept of equal access to information. States must be aware of, and give their consent for, the remote sensing activities taking place above their territories.

6. Colombia supported the position of those States that considered it necessary to define clearly the boundary between airspace and outer space, because that would clarify the scope of application of the international treaties on outer space. In

(Mr. Alzate, Colombia)

that context, it was important to bear in mind the unique and limited nature of the geostationary orbit, which required a special legal régime. As an equatorial country, Colombia was concerned about the saturation of the geostationary orbit. A special régime for the geostationary orbit would not be in conflict with the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which did not specifically cover the geostationary orbit. It was unfair to suggest that an applicable régime already existed or that it was not necessary. In that context, his delegation supported a continuing discussion of the general ideas formulated in document A/AC.105/430, annex 2, paragraph 20.

7. Mr. NAIMI-ARFA (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation believed the most fundamental step towards ensuring the exploration and use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes would be the banning of arms in outer space. Ironically, at a time when tensions between the super-Powers were relaxed, new resources were still being allocated to bolster military activity in outer space. The super-Powers must intensify their efforts to conclude a comprehensive treaty banning arms in outer space.

8. UNISPACE 82 recommendations to meet the needs of developing countries with regard to space technology were extremely important, but had not yet been fully implemented. The recommendations contained in the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee on its twenty-seventh session (A/AC.105/456) provided a sound basis for their implementation. Long-range fellowships for in-depth training would also promote greater co-operation in space science and technology between developed and developing countries. Remote sensing could be of great value to their socio-economic development plans. As a country faced with frequent natural disasters, Iran wished to increase utilization of space technology applications in order to minimize and alleviate their impact. The geostationary orbit was another limited natural resource with special importance to telecommunications, and all countries must be guaranteed equal access to it, developing countries in particular.

9. In the context of its first five-year economic, social and development plan (1989-1993), Iran planned to conduct a feasibility study on possible uses of space technology in remote sensing, meteorology, education and communication. It had participated in Intelsat V and planned to participate in Intelsat VI as well. It was also considering the establishment of a national space agency to co-ordinate and organize its space-related activities, including implementation of a domestic satellite network through manufacture and launch of its national domestic satellite.

10. Mr. HERNANDEZ BASAVE (Mexico) said that it was urgently important for the United Nations to promote effective measures for preventing the growing militarization of outer space. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) had been considering ways and means of preserving outer space for peaceful uses for the past seven years, as had the Conference on Disarmament for the past eight, reflecting the international community's concern at the

(Mr. Hernandez Basave, Mexico)

militarization of outer space. The work of COPUOS and the Conference on Disarmament should be expanded to include an exchange of information between those two bodies.

11. His delegation disagreed with those who maintained that COPUOS was not competent to consider the question of the militarization of outer space. On the contrary, by focusing on scientific, technical and legal aspects of the problem, the Committee would be of great use in the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament.

12. His delegation was pleased at the agreement reached in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee on the recommendations for the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. Unfortunately, the Sub-Committee had not been able to make more substantive progress in drafting scientific and technical critieria for the safe use of nuclear energy in outer space. Mexico was, however, confident that the Sub-Committee would soon be able to agree on a series of principles. Of particular importance was the need to define clearly the term "launching State" and the responsibilities assigned to it. That question should be examined at the next meeting of the Legal Sub-Committee.

13. Approval of principles governing the use of nuclear power sources in outer space would be an additional contribution by the Committee to the development of international space law. His delegation expressed its appreciation to the delegation of Canada for the efforts it had made in that area.

14. His delegation supported the proposal of Sweden to consider the question of space debris. The Legal Sub-Committee should consider the applicability of the principle of transparency to all space activities. The Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space would be a good starting point in that regard. Consideration should be given to adapting the relevant international instruments so as to achieve universal applicability of the legal régime for outer space.

15. Progressive development of space law must be given high priority in the United Nations. An examination of the legal a pects of the exploration and utilization of outer space must take particular account of the needs and interests of developing countries by focusing on the creation of a legal framework guaranteeing a fair distribution of the benefits resulting from space activities.

16. As a member of the Group of 77, Mexico called upon all delegations to participate constructively in the Working Group established to consider that new subject. It also supported the proposal of the Group of 77 to begin co-operating with the Working Group of the Whole to Evaluate the Implementation of the Recommendations of UNISPACE 82.

17. With regard to matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space and to the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, his delegation viewed with concern the fact that a number of countries favoured solving

(Mr. Hernandez Basave, Mexico)

that problem by merely eliminating the Legal Sub-Committee's Programme. While for certain space Powers, the absence of a boundary between airspace and outer space entailed no practical difficulties, for the majority of countries, the boundary of their sovereignty in the airspace remained a problem.

18. Mexico supported the proposal by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to begin consideration in 1991 of international legal problems relating to the flights of aerospace systems. It was also necessary to analyse the proposal to establish a special legal régime for the geostationary orbit. The unofficial working paper presented in the Legal Sub-Committee in 1989 by a group of equatorial countries was a good basis for considering that question.

19. Of the items on the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, those dealing with the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82 were those that would have the most direct effect for improving international co-operation in outer space. For the developing countries, such mechanisms were an opportunity to gain access to the benefits derived from space technology. Notwithstanding the additional contributions from Member States and organizations, the Programme still had considerable difficulties with financial resources. Until those resources were increased, the Programme could hardly have a significant impact. With regard to the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, his delegation supported the recommendations of the Working Group that the Programme continue to be primarily of broad scope and directed towards on-site training for space-technology projects. Mexico also expressed an interest in implementing the recommendations of the Working Group. In particular, it called upon all States, especially those with space capabilities, to inform the Secretary-General annually on activities that might improve international co-operation.

20. It was essential to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the end of the cold war and the tangible progress in arms reduction achieved by the super-Powers to avert an arms race in outer space.

21. Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria) said that the peaceful conquest of space involved goals that could only be met by the joint efforts of the entire international community. Rapid progress in space technology had resulted also in developments with a direct impact on peoples' lives. It would be very difficult to imagine the world communications and weather forecasting network without satellites, for example.

22. Though Bulgaria was a small country with limited resources, it had participated actively in international, regional and bilateral co-operation in space activities. Two Bulgarian cosmonauts had flown aboard Soviet space ships, and Bulgarian-designed equipment had successfully performed in the Phobos and Shipka projects. The major political and economic changes under way in Bulgaria also were having an impact on science and applied research, by streamlining the institutional basis and management. Space research priorities were in the process of reassessment, which would result in a new long-term National Space Programme.

(Mr. Todorov, Bulgaria)

23. Substantial progress had been achieved at the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee towards agreement on the principles of the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. In the view of his delegation, the next item which the Sub-Committees should consider was the problem of space ecology, including the issues of space debris and the use of space research and technology for environmental protection of Earth and its atmosphere. The specific proposals concerning the delimitation of outer space and the geostationary orbit made during the sessions of the two sub-committees were a good basis for further debate. His delegation also supported the proclamation by the General Assembly of International Space Year in 1992. Its goals were to strengthen international co-operation in space research and to co-ordinate mankind's efforts to achieve those priorities.

24. Mr. MOUNKHOU (Mongolia) said that improved international co-operation would provide an opportunity to strengthen the political and material basis for the peaceful uses of outer space in the interest of all nations, in particular the needy ones. It was to be hoped that the United Nations would play an enhanced role in the area.

25. His delegation reiterated its support of the agreement reached on the set of recommendations concerning the safe use of nuclear power sources in outer space. It welcomed the decision to consider at the 1991 session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee applications of airborne and satellite remote sensing for prospecting mineral and ground-water resources and for monitoring and managing biological resources, with emphasis on agriculture, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries. That would greatly contribute to implementing the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and the recommendations of UNISPACE 82. Studies submitted to the next session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee would be more useful if they contained the latest information on space applications of practical importance for the developing countries.

26. His delegation endorsed the view that COPUOS should endeavour to conduct evaluations of the impact of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications on the efforts of developing countries to use the spin-off benefits of space science and technology for their development needs.

27. Mongolia welcomed the inclusion in the 1991 agenda of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of an item concerning the progress in national and international space activities related to the Earth's environment. In that connection, it might be appropriate for COPUOS to prepare special research material to facilitate the developing countries' application of space science and technology for protecting the environment.

28. Deliberations at the past sessions of the Sub-Committee had underlined the increasing need for the establishment of an international framework for providing developing countries easy access to relevant scientific information and technological achievements. The good will of all States members of COPUOS with a space capability would help create a favourable atmosphere for considering the legal aspects relating to implementation of the principle that the exploration and

(Mr. Mounkhou, Mongolia)

utilization of outer space must be for the benefit of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries.

29. Mongolia urged the United Nations to do its utmost so that the international space information service and regional training centres recommended by General Assembly resolution 44/46 could be established well before International Space Year in 1992. Mongolia was keenly interested in participating in and benefiting from all major activities carried out by the United Nations in the exploration and uses of outer space. Owing to its extremely limited technological basis and financial resources, Mongolia relied heavily on the support and co-operation of countries and organizations with space capabilities. It was to be hoped that the positive changes in international relations and the spirit of growing co-operation would help create more favourable conditions for enabling the developing countries to make increased use of space technology to promote their social and economic development.

30. Mrs. OUEDRAOGO (Burkina Faso) said that space science and technology could make significant contributions to economic and social development and to environmental protection. All mankind was not able to profit from its applications, however, and the gap between countries with access to space technology and those without such access appeared to widen with each new technological development. For developing countries, International Space Year, proclaimed for 1992, was an opportunity to become more involved in space technology applications. It would have increasing uses for economic and social development, for example, in communications, prospecting for natural resources, meteorology, agriculture, cartography and search and rescue missions.

31. Her delegation supported the proposed programme for United Nations participation in International Space Year (A/AC.105/445). The needs of developing countries, particularly in education and awareness, would be addressed. Demystification and dissemination of space science and technology would encourage States to undertake national programmes for their application. Celebration of International Space Year provided an opportunity for evaluation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82 and adjustment in goals as needed.

32. In order to ensure that outer space was utilized for peaceful means, international space law must be developed further. An international agency or court should be established with the purpose of enforcing that law and ensuring that space was used exclusively for peaceful means, to the benefit of all States.

33. Her delegation was pleased that the next session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee would address applications of remote sensing for natural resource and ground-water prospecting. Burkina Faso had understood quickly the impact that remote sensing could have on its country's development but lacked the means to employ it. The high cost of analysis and study of remote sensing data put it out of the reach of those countries with the greatest need for it in their economic and social development. Africa must give higher priority to remote sensing applications in its development programmes. Some States, despite their

(Mrs. Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso)

awareness of the importance of space activities, faced financial limitations, however. Such was the case for the regional remote sensing centre at Ouagadougou. It had been established in 1977 by the Economic Commission for Africa with the objectives of facilitating access to remote sensing for all States through operation of a reception station and storage, reproduction and dissemination of data, providing data analysis to members, and developing a training and assistance programme. Due to non-payment of contributions by member States, the centre was now experiencing major financial difficulties. As part of the preparations for International Space Year, her delegation suggested activities to sensitize and mobilize those States who could furnish that centre with adequate financial resources.

34. Mrs. SINHA (India) said that India was strongly committed to the peaceful uses of outer space. Its national space programme allied international co-operation with the application of modern technology to the needs of a developing nation. The Indian multi-purpose satellite INSAT-1D had been launched in June 1990, and the indigenously built Indian Remote Sensing Satellite IRS-1A had been operating successfully for two years. Through its "sharing of experience" (SHARES) programme, India had provided training in several space applications to people from other developing countries. It had also participated in the international Satellite-Aided Search and Rescue programme by establishing a local user terminal and mission control centre.

35. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) had made significant contributions to developing international space law and providing space applications assistance to developing countries. However, there was still a large gap between the needs of many countries and the resources available. Some progress had been made by the Committee in evolving international legal and technical principles to ensure the safe use of nuclear power sources in outer space; she hoped that the Committee would soon reach a common understanding on that item. In view of the danger posed by the growing amounts of debris in outer space, her delegation wished to see that item included in the agenda of the Committee or its Sub-Committees. The Committee's agenda item entitled "Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes" was linked with the question of preventing an arms race in outer space. The work of the Committee and that of the Conference on Disarmament should thus be complementary and carried out in co-ordination. The Committee should make special efforts to ensure that International Space Year (1992) activities and programmes benefited the developing countries. To that end, India was collaborating with the United Nations Programme on Space Applications to organize a workshop on basic space sciences for developing nations. It had also made proposals in the Space Agency Forum on International Space Year for operative use of space through a mission called "Peace" (Protection of Environment for Assuring Cleaner Earth).

36. More intensive international co-operation and the development of indigenous capabilities were needed to enable developing countries to reap the benefits of space technology. There should be no restrictions on technical information exchange, training or supply of equipment for peaceful developmental applications.

(Mrs. Sinha, India)

Her delegation wished to see those problems effectively addressed under the new agenda item of the Legal Sub-Committee.

37. Mr. PERRI (Brazil) expressed his country's grave concern over the persistence of barriers to the free exchange of scientific and technological information that impeded access to and production and use of space technology, which had become increasingly important for social and economic development. No particular State or group of States should take advantage of its technological need to impose restrictions or discriminatory regulations on others. Such practices ran counter to the spirit of the Outer Space Treaty. Direct negotiations, particularly within COPUOS, should promote confidence among countries and ensure that the flow of such knowledge be used strictly for peaceful purposes. Peace was related to freedom of information and knowledge. Some of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had yet to be implemented. The most important goals were making outer space a "province of mankind" and extending to all nations the non-discriminatory means to develop their national space programmes, individually and in association with others. COPUOS was called upon to further develop, in the form of legal principles, basic guidelines for the development of international co-operation in outer space. In 1991, the Working Group of the Legal Sub-Committee would consider a new item entitled "outer space benefits", aimed at defining a general framework for space activity support based on the principle of preferential and non-reciprocal assistance to developing countries. As stressed by the representative of Nigeria, there was a need for an international framework for the development of national space capabilities; exchange of data and information between space Powers and others; joint partnerships between space Powers and others regarding design, manufacture of equipment, launching of space objects, etc.; and an appropriate framework for redistributing the spin-offs of space science.

38. The need to ensure that space should be used strictly for peaceful purposes and the need to foster space co-operation underscored the complementarity of the work of United Nations forums such as COPUOS and the Conference on Disarmament. However, procedural objections had been raised in an attempt to obscure that complementarity. His delegation understood the specific responsibilities of the Conference on Disarmament and COPUOS, but felt that they should be mutually interactive in order to avoid duplication and pursue more effectively the goal of using outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of mankind.

39. Increasing attention had been paid to space applications regarding the monitoring and protection of the environment, as recommended by General Assembly resolution 44/46 on international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space. Particular attention should be paid to the question of space debris. The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee's report had included a special section on space and earth environment and had redrafted an item to read "Progress in national and international space activities related to Earth environment, in particular, progress in the geosphere-biosphere (global change) programme". Consideration should be given to ways of complementing the efforts under way for the United

(Mr. Perri, Brazil)

Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be hosted by Brazil in 1992. He welcomed the progress made in both the Scientific and Technical and the Legal Sub-Committees regarding the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. Consideration should be given to the important question of prior notification of the launching of space objects with nuclear power sources on board in order to enhance confidence and enable precautionary measures to be taken. Agreement on a final set of principles on nuclear power sources in outer space was now within reach. He hoped that such a set of principles might be adopted at the 1991 session of COPUOS in Graz, Austria. Other issues related to Earth and space environment might also be considered in future by the Committee. Priority should be given to threats to the Earth's environment from space activities and to the preservation of space environment itself, in the hope that patterns of use of resources on Earth might not be repeated in outer space. It was essential to seize the moment and build on the new international climate lest current opportunities be missed.

40. Mr. GONZALEZ (Chile) asked that note should be taken in plenary session of the excellent work of the Outer Space Affairs Division and the Secretariat. He thanked the Chairman of the Working Group for his painstaking preparation of draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.17, which he hoped would be adopted by consensus. He drew attention to the important contribution of the representative of the Vatican and to the serious technical work accomplished in the Committee on the question of debris in outer space.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
16th meeting
held on
Monday, 19 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 34: POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA (continued) (A/SPC/45/L.3 and Add.1-8)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the requests for hearings contained in documents A/SPC/45/L.3 and Add.1-8. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the requests.

2. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 73: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued) (A/SPC/45/L.17)

3. Mr. HOANG VINH THANH (Viet Nam) said that the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space had been one of the important areas of international co-operation in recent years. In order to intensify those activities it was indispensible that there should be effective measures to prevent the introduction of an arms race into outer space. His delegation shared the view that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) should complement the work being done in bilateral and multilateral forums towards preventing an extension of the arms race into outer space and could provide substantive input to the discussions and negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. In that connection, it was pleased to note that the agenda item on ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes continued to be a priority item on the agenda of the thirty-fourth session of COPUOS.

4. It was gratifying to note that encouraging progress had been made during the past year in the Scientific and Technical and Legal Sub-Committees of COPUOS on the issue of the safe use of nuclear power sources in outer space and that consensus had been reached in the Legal Sub-Committee on draft principle 3. His delegation hoped that the forthcoming sessions of COPUOS and its two Sub-Committees would successfully resolve all other outstanding questions with respect to that agenda item.

5. With regard to the definition and delimitation of outer space, his delegation continued to believe that it was necessary to have a clear distinction between the legal régime of airspace coming under national jurisdiction and the legal régime of outer space. It also agreed that the geostationery orbit constituted a limited natural resource and an integral part of outer space and that an early agreement should be reached on the principles governing the rights of all countries to use the orbit equally and equitably, taking into account the interests of the developing countries.

6. His delegation was pleased to note that the Legal Sub-Committee had established a working group on the agenda item dealing with the consideration of the legal aspects of the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space was carried out for the benefit and in the interests of

(Mr. Hoang Vinh Thanh, Viet Nam)

all countries, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries. It warmly welcomed and highly valued the efforts of the Expert on Space Applications and the Outer Space Affairs Division in carrying out the Programme on Space Applications during the past year. It was regrettable that financial shortages continued to prevent further progress on the programme.

7. His delegation supported the decision of the General Assembly to designate 1992 as International Space Year, and it was its hope that the Year would provide an opportunity to strengthen and expand international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space. It shared the view that the training and educational capabilities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications should be utilized to give the United Nations a meaningful role in International Space Year through voluntary contributions.

8. His country had begun to participate in the exploration and uses of outer space for peaceful purposes in 1980, and since that time had successfully conducted a programme of space research and applications in support of the country's scientific and economic development. The important results achieved in remote sensing activities had contributed significantly to the survey and assessment of Viet Nam's natural resources, and initial successes had been achieved in using satellite photographs to study the formation and development of hurricanes. Encouraging progress had also been recorded in other fields, such as space biomedicine, space physics and space communications. It was his country's sincere hope that in coming years it would continue to enjoy further assistance and co-operation from the international community, including the United Nations, in carrying out its efforts in those fields. It supported draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.17, and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

9. Mr. ZAWELS (Argentina) said that his delegation supported the principle that outer space should be used for peaceful purposes only and for the benefit of all mankind, and believed that it was essential to work out an international legal régime regulating space activities which took into account the interests of all countries and particularly the needs of the developing countries.

10. Because of its complexity, space activity was a field which required international co-operation. His delegation believed that such co-operation should be based on the principle of complementarity and that the United Nations could play an important role in promoting such complementary co-operation. In order to make it possible for the entire international community to share in the benefits of space activity, some degree of transfer of technology was required. It had so far proved impossible to establish an environment making possible the best use of such transfers, and imaginative initiatives were now required to find mechanisms which would make it possible to channel the benefits of space activity to all countries. Those mechanisms should be based on the principles of mutual benefit and case-by-case treatment.

11. His delegation believed that everything necessary must be done to prevent an arms race in outer space. For that reason, the COPUOS should design ways and means

(Mr. Zawels, Argentina)

to ensure that space was utilized only for peaceful purposes. The exchange of information and greater co-operation on the basis of shared consensus positions would help to achieve that end. In the sphere of disarmament, an exchange of information between COPUOS and the Conference on Disarmament's Ad Hoc Committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space would contribute to increased understanding and a more effective use of the resources of the United Nations system.

12. His delegation welcomed the progress achieved in the Legal Sub-Committee of COPUOS with regard to the draft principles on the use of sources of nuclear energy in outer space and supported the suggestion by the Soviet delegation that there should be an exchange of views on the legal problems raised by aerospace systems flights. His delegation also considered it important to continue the analysis of the character and use of the geostationary orbit on the basis of the working paper submitted by some members of the Group of 77. Greater efforts should be made to comply with the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82).

13. The United Nations Programme on Space Applications had excellent human resources and was a potential aid to the development of the poorest countries and those least advanced in space technology. For those reasons its financial resources should be increased.

14. The draft resolution before the Committee had been well drafted, and his delegation hoped that it would be adopted without a vote.

15. Mr. NEJEDLY (Czechoslovakia) said that in spite of not being a space Power, his country was actively engaged in a number of international projects in the field of space, mostly in the framework of INTERKOSMOS, which had its seat in Prague. His Government had participated in the Interball project, devoted to the study of solar-terrestrial physics and the Earth's ionosphere, and in the Cluster-Regatta project of global studies of the magnetosphere with the network of satellites. Furthermore, his country had participated in the Mars-94 project as part of the long-term comprehensive exploration of the planet Mars. It was also participating in other scientific programmes, such as the Apex project of modelling geophysical events in the near-Earth plasma by using active methods, or the Coronas project, designed to study solar processes in a wide range of electromagnetic radiations during maximum solar activity. Those and other programmes were co-ordinated by Czechoslovakia in the framework of the global co-operation of space agencies such as NASA, ESA, ISAS and INTERKOSMOS. Czechoslovakia had also helped to organize international meetings of scientists; for example, it had hosted an international workshop on the study of wave processes by active methods and a meeting of representatives of 48 countries on the subject of monitoring and broadcasting methods for very short-term weather forecasts.

16. Turning to the question of the work of COPUOS and of its two Sub-Committees, he said that his delegation was pleased to note that slow but steady progress had been made, both in the work of COPUOS itself and in the implementation of the

(Mr. Nejedly, Czechoslovakia)

recommendations of UNISPACE 82. Regarding the activities of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, he noted that there had been general agreement that space debris was an issue of concern to all nations; his delegation supported the proposal to put the question of protecting the space environment, including the question of space debris, on the agenda of COPUOS. As in all environmental problems, a postponement of the consideration of the issue would increase the cost of possible preventive as well as remedial measures. Moreover, discussions within the United Nations would bring the problem to a sharper focus, thus enabling national and international scientific and technical institutions to concentrate their efforts on the most important aspects of the question. His delegation welcomed the encouraging conclusions reached by the Legal Sub-Committee with regard to progress in the work on the draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and agreement on principle 3, guidelines and criteria for their safe use. He hoped that it would be possible to complete work on the draft principles at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee.

17. His delegation regarded as positive that in its resolution 44/46, the General Assembly had endorsed the initiative of international scientific organizations and bodies to designate 1992 as International Space Year, as well as the recommendation of COPUOS that International Space Year should be regarded as an opportunity to enhance international co-operation for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries. In the view of his delegation, a substantial role in that respect should be played by the United Nations, by making use of the training and educational capabilities of its Programme on Space Applications.

18. Mr. SATOH (Japan) said that his delegation welcomed the progress made by COPUOS and its Sub-Committees during the past year. The consensus reached on guidelines and criteria for the safe use of nuclear power sources in outer space, first in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and later in the Legal Sub-Committee, constituted a significant step forward. His delegation hoped that a consensus would be reached on the entire set of draft principles at an early date. His delegation also welcomed the beginning of substantive discussion of the new item by the Legal Sub-Committee and was sure that the item would be the focus of more detailed and active consideration by the Working Group during the coming year.

19. It was clear that advances in space technology could have a double-edged effect on the environment; what was required was the human wisdom to use their enormous potential to best advantage. Co-operation and discussion among Member States would play an important role toward that end. Accordingly, his delegation welcomed the decision to change the title of the agenda item of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee concerning progress in the geosphere-biosphere programme to include "national and international space activities related to the earth environment."

20. The problem of rapidly accumulating debris in outer space entailed serious threats to the space and human environment as well as to future space activities. His delegation therefore welcomed the draft resolution before the Committee and

(Mr. Satoh, Japan)

would urge that at future sessions of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee Member States should share with one another the results obtained through their national research programmes. It also hoped that the Sub-Committee would, when it had finished its work on nuclear power sources, take up for extensive consideration the important problem of space debris.

21. His delegation was glad that 1992 had been designated International Space Year. The Year would provide an important opportunity to enhance international co-operation to ensure that the benefits gained from the exploration and utilization of outer space were extended to all countries, particularly developing countries. It believed that the United Nations, by utilizing the training and educational capabilities of its Programme on Space Applications, would play a major role in that endeavour and appreciated the efforts of the Outer Space Affairs Division to give renewed impetus to United Nations applications programmes through its ISY activities. His Government intended to participate actively in ISY, and had decided, for example, to provide two Japanese experts to the Outer Space Division to assist in preparations for the Year.

22. The recent easing of tensions would, he believed, strengthen co-operation among States with regard to the peaceful uses of outer space and benefit the work of COPUOS and its Sub-Committees. By once again adopting by consensus the draft resolution before the Committee, the General Assembly would enhance the work of those important bodies.

23. Mr. POERNOMO (Indonesia) said that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) had, through its programmes, been instrumental in bridging the gap between the developed and developing countries in the areas of remote sensing, communications, meteorology, navigation, biosphere preservation and space research. Although the question of the militarization of outer space was being considered by the Conference on Disarmament, his delegation felt that COPUOS, in keeping with its mandate to discuss outer space matters, could make a substantial contribution to the discussions and negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and could maintain an essential contact between the two forums, which could exchange information on the results of their deliberations.

24. His delegation was pleased with the General Assembly decision to declare 1992 International Space Year and with COPUOS's recommendation that international co-operation should be further intensified for the benefit of all countries, with particular attention to the needs of the developing countries. Starting in 1992, Indonesia planned to hold a National Space Science and Applications Conference in the region at least every two years to promote and stimulate exchanges of information on space science and technology. Indonesia also intended to establish a regional centre for long-term education and research in space science and its applications, which countries outside the region would also be welcome to join.

25. The problem of pollution required the urgent formulation of standards and regulations to protect and preserve the environment in outer space. He hoped that the international community would combine its efforts to facilitate research on ways to guarantee adequate protection.

(Mr. Poernomo, Indonesia)

26. He commended the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee on the satisfactory work it had done on priority issues especially on the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82. His delegation attached particular importance to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications which organized workshops, training programmes and seminars to assist developing countries.

27. Concerning remote sensing satellites, the space transportation system and the spin-offs of space technology, he wished to see more cost-effective commercialization of remote sensing activities, so that greater advantage could be taken of the advanced technology through, for example, the dissemination of technological benefits to address economic and social needs.

28. On the question of the definition and delimitation of outer space and the use of the geostationary orbit, Indonesia, which was an equatorial country, regarded the latter as a limited resource. It felt, therefore, that its utilization should be based on a specific legal régime to ensure its rational and equitable use as well as access to it by developing countries. Member States should hold genuine negotiations with a view to finding an acceptable solution which would take into account the special requirements of the developing countries and the preferential rights of the equatorial countries.

29. COPUOS was the appropriate body to elaborate a legal régime, while the International Telecommunication Union was the relevant agency to deal with the technical aspects of the geostationary orbit. The Legal Sub-Committee and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should continue to work towards finding common ground and a mutually acceptable solution.

30. The use of nuclear power resources in outer space had long been a source of concern to Indonesia, and the threat of re-entry of nuclear power sources called for immediate attention. The consensus reached in the Legal Sub-Committee was welcome. Indonesia looked forward to the successful completion of the draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. It was pleased to note the establishment of a working group of the Legal Sub-Committee on the exploration and utilization of outer space for the benefit and in the interests of all States. The commercialization of outer space could adversely affect the developing countries, and therefore the Working Group should devote special attention to the matter.

31. Mr. FAWZY (Egypt) said that despite the unanimous agreement that outer space should be explored in the interest of all States, a situation was maintained in which only a privileged few benefited from outer space exploration. The gap between technological progress and the drafting of laws and regulations on the subject was causing increasing apprehension. Worse still, the increasingly intricate technology was being used for military purposes. COPUOS and its Sub-Committees should quickly bridge that gap, otherwise their discussions could quickly be overtaken by technological development.

(Mr. Fawzy, Egypt)

32. The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies should be reviewed in order to end the dichotomy that implicitly allowed the deployment of weapons in outer space while prohibiting it on the Moon and other celestial bodies. His delegation hoped that the discussion in the Legal Sub-Committee on the benefits of outer space which would focus on the means to enhance international co-operation in science, technology and education. The exchange of information in those fields should be more institutionalized and provide for the access to it of countries with different space capabilities. Both those measures should be incorporated into a legal framework.

33. He was also concerned about protection of the outer space environment and hoped for an early discussion on all aspects of the problem. The agreements reached at the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee on the safe use of outer space were a welcome development and he hoped for a consensus on the remaining principles governing the use of nuclear power sources in outer space.

34. He stressed that his country believed that the peaceful uses of outer space and prevention of its militarization were inextricably linked. Since the Conference on Disarmament and COPUOS shared the common aim of preserving outer space for the benefit of mankind, permanent - though not necessarily formal - contact should be established between both organs.

35. Mrs. CASTRO DE BARISH (Costa Rica) said that her delegation appreciated the work done by COPUOS and its Sub-Committees during its forty-fifth session and that the agreements reached on the use of nuclear energy in outer space were among its most important results. She was pleased that an evaluation and further study of natural resources and the environment had been included in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee's 1991 agenda. Given the close link between outer space exploration and the maintenance of peace and security, no effort could be too great to keep the arms race out of outer space.

36. Because of its strong belief in international co-operation for the peaceful use of outer space her country had held a Space Conference of the Americas: Prospects for Development in San José in March 1990, with financial assistance from UNDP, the Special Unit for Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries as well as the Outer Space Affairs Division. It had been attended inter alia by 22 Latin American countries, by regional and international space agencies, the United Nations Outer Space Affairs Division, three specialized agencies and 150 scientists and technologists from all the Americas.

37. The Space Conference, which had formed part of the programme proposed by the Government of Costa Rica to UNDP, had included conclusions of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The Conference had focused on five topics: basic space sciences, applied space sciences, space technology, education and legal aspects. The idea behind that project had been that co-operation in such areas was possible without costly and cumbersome organizations and that the best approach was to identify projects to be

(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa Rica)

executed by large or small groups of countries which shared common goals, plans and pooled resources.

38. The Conference had been a success because it had been well attended by the countries of the area, the United Nations specialized agencies and scientists from within the region and outside it, it had been well prepared, and in a constructive spirit the delegations had adopted a final document by consensus. The discussions between the various groups had been frank and open, and the United Nations had given valuable support through its Outer Space Affairs Division. A good number of projects had been identified for execution by groups and space agencies, and it had been decided to have further meetings in the coming years. The Government of Costa Rica was responsible for financing follow-up action and was serving as an interim secretariat. Another conference would be held in two or three years. Contacts had been established with Central American countries and Panama, which, during the Conference, had expressed the desire to create a subregional co-operation mechanism within the framework of existing institutions, with a view to economic integration.

39. All the delegations to the San José Conference had felt that an important step had been taken by the nations of the American continent and more especially by those of Latin America and the Caribbean to establish closer ties and to enable their scientists to exchange ideas among themselves and with the representatives of countries. The opportunities for co-operation and for the execution of specific projects were clearly established. Her delegation believed that many more of those projects should be executed in the future but that the assistance of the United Nations especially its Outer Space Affairs Division was essential. Her country was prepared to celebrate International Space Year and felt that the best way to do so would be to define areas and programmes for co-operation between North and South and between South and South and hoped that the seed sown in San José would bear fruit within three years or less.

40. Mr. INFANTE (Cuba) said that he wished to reiterate Cuba's support for the non-militarization of outer space and to stress his Government's position that COPUOS could and should provide substantive input to the discussions and negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. Promoting and strengthening the peaceful uses of outer space required effective measures to prevent an extension of the senseless arms race into outer space. His delegation also supported the definition and delimitation of outer space and of the geostationary orbit which, as an integral part of space, should be used in a rational and equitable manner, for the benefit of all States, particularly the developing ones.

41. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the new item to be considered by the Working Group of the Legal Sub-Committee, on the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries, was related to the question of the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

(Mr. Infante, Cuba)

42. Turning to the question of space debris, he said that his delegation agreed with the statement made by the Chairman of COPUOS to the effect that space debris constituted an unacceptable risk to man and material in space and on the ground. The question merited serious study.

43. Cuba, which had been participating as an observer in the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, was persuaded that international co-operation was vital to the exploration and peaceful use of outer space. His Government had taken part in a variety of bilateral and multilateral programmes, and had co-sponsored the United Nations Workshop on Space Communications for Development, held in Cuba for the benefit of Member States in the region of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). His delegation wished to request that consideration should be given to the possibility of enlarging the number of full members of COPUOS, bearing in mind the fact that several States shared Cuba's legitimate and understandable interest. His Government would like to be a full member of COPUOS and hoped that the Special Political Committee would support its request.

44. Mr. TETU (Canada), pointing out that Canada's space programme had developed throughout its long history on the basis of international co-operation, said that in November of 1989 the Prime Ministers of Canada and of the USSR had signed an intergovernmental agreement on co-operation in space science and the peaceful uses of outer space. Also in 1989, Canada and Japan had established a space panel, under a science and technology agreement to plan and to co-ordinate co-operative space activities. Within the domestic programme, his Government had entered the construction phase for the first Earth observation satellite, Radarsat, to be launched by the United States in 1994. Near the end of 1990, the second Canadian was scheduled to fly in space. Dr. Roberta Bondar of Canada's Astronaut Programme, and German scientist Dr. Ulf Meyerbold would serve as prime payload specialists on the International Microgravity Laboratory I to be flown on a space shuttle flight expected to take place in the next few weeks. Canada had a long history of co-operation in remote sensing with developing countries. One recent development had been the understanding reached in November 1989 between the Canadian Space Agency and Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE). As a result, Canada would provide Brazil with equipment to upgrade its remote-sensing receiving station in order to enable it to receive data from the European Space Agency's ERS-1 radar remote sensing satellite. INPE would later upgrade its station to receive Radarsat data.

45. Turning to the work of the Sub-Committees, he said that his delegation was pleased that significant progress had been made. The thorough work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had allowed the Legal Sub-Committee to achieve consensus on principle 3 of the draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, concerning guidelines and criteria for safe use.

46. During consideration of the theme fixed for special attention at the last session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, namely "The use of space

(Mr. Tetu, Canada)

technology in terrestrial search and rescue and in disaster relief activities", the Sub-Committee had had an opportunity to consider the international satellite search and rescue system known as Cospas-Sarsat established by Canada, France, the USSR and the United States. His Government knew from direct experience how useful the system was and supported the recommendation that Member States and relevant international organizations should consider using Cospas-Sarsat for their search and rescue activities.

47. He said that Canada was developing a domestic programme for International Space Year and was participating in the international development of projects through the Space Agency Forum on International Space Year. Canada was a leader on a project that addressed many interests and needs of countries around the world, namely the Global Change Encyclopaedia project, which would assemble global Earth observation data from remote sensing observations of many countries and present it in an easily accessible format. The system would provide global information on important themes such as desertification, vegetation change and the greenhouse effect. The system would also provide a basic environmental modelling capacity that would allow it to be useful for many years after 1992. That illustrated another theme of Canada's remote sensing activities, the development of low-cost tools that could make accessible to a wide variety of potential users the benefits of space technology.

48. Canada recognized the importance of implementing the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. His Government was committed to international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space and to working with developing countries to strengthen their capability to make use of space. It did that both through bilateral activities and through support for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, most often by making available Canadian experts for United Nations workshops and training courses, such as the one held recently at Havana on Space Communications for Development.

49. Finally, his delegation noted with satisfaction the growing attention being devoted to questions of space and environment in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. That was a logical outcome of the increasing concern with environmental questions around the world, which appeared in two aspects: first, the use of space technologies to conduct research on environmental problems on Earth and to provide operational information used in managing natural resources and, secondly, the consideration of the protection and preservation of the space environment. In the latter case, Canada looked forward to considering the issue of space debris, an issue which had become over time more and more important, and which should first be considered, as suggested by the representative of Sweden, at the scientific and technical level.

50. Mrs. TAHIR-KHELI (United States of America) said that the details of United States international activities in the peaceful uses of outer space were contained in her Government's annual report to the Secretary-General, which should be available in the very near future. In that regard, she said that the United States

(Mrs. Tahir-Kheli, United States)

was commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the first weather satellite, Tiros-1, launched by the United States Government in 1960. The launching of the weather satellite had also marked the beginning of the highly successful tradition of international sharing of environmental satellite data. Today, over 100 nations received data directly and free of charge from the system for use in vitally important weather prediction and monitoring.

51. Her delegation was encouraged by the signs of increased East-West co-operation in various fields, which was also evident in the work of COPUOS and its Sub-Committees, most notably in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. Its discussions, together with the very useful scientific presentations recorded in the report by the Secretariat (A/AC.105/459), had reinforced her delegation's view that COPUOS had been on the right track in recent years in seeking to strengthen the scientific and technical underpinnings of its work and to reorient it away from extraneous and frequently divisive issues for which it plainly had no mandate, such as disarmament. Her delegation had been particularly heartened to see, during the last session of COPUOS, an emerging view among member States on the ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. That topic had generated a wide divergence of views and some had used it as an opportunity for steering the discussion into the disarmament arena. The Committee, however, had taken a step forward by recognizing that it could make a real contribution by strengthening its scientific work and concentrating on efforts to broaden and deepen space co-operation by all countries.

52. For International Space Year, her delegation was pleased to see that the General Assembly had given clear direction in resolution 44/46, which defined a potentially significant role for the Programme on Space Applications in the field of education and training. The regional space conference hosted by the Government of Costa Rica in March 1990 had brought together the countries of America to discuss ways for strengthening co-operation in the region. Her delegation looked forward to 1991, when the international community would be able to discuss how COPUOS itself could engage in and lend appropriate support to that multilateral effort. Of particular note had been the decision of COPUOS to have the Outer Space Affairs Division undertake a study of the spin-off benefits of space technology which would be of great interest to all member States. Those were tangible opportunities for COPUOS to enhance international co-operation in keeping with its mandate as the only standing committee of the General Assembly with an exclusive charge to consider co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

53. The Committee had long agreed that strengthening international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space implied the need for the Committee and its Sub-Committees to improve whenever necessary the methods and forms of their work. Some progress had been made towards putting COPUOS and its Sub-Committees on a more businesslike footing, particularly with regard to the perennial problem of the Legal Sub-Committee's organization of work. Her delegation applauded the action taken by the Committee in agreeing to specific measures that would improve the efficiency of its Legal Sub-Committee. It welcomed the recommendation that the Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee should work with delegations on the question.

(Mrs. Tahir-Kheli, United States)

Her delegation was also pleased that COPUOS had agreed that discussions would continue with a view to reaching agreement on the venue of subsequent sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee, taking into account General Assembly resolution 44/201 B (sect. III).

54. Mr. KADRAT (Iraq) said that space technology and participation in activities for the peaceful uses of outer space must be accorded special importance by the developing countries and that the role of international and regional organizations in promoting international co-operation in the exchange of information and expertise relating to space technology and its applications must therefore be strengthened. While scientific and technological progress had opened endless horizons to mankind, that had not taken place in isolation from contemporary problems. The arms race must be prevented from being extended into outer space, which was the property of mankind as a whole and not of a particular group of States. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space must therefore remain in touch with the progress being made in the disarmament field.

55. COPUOS deserved full support in performing its fundamental role in the discussion of issues relating to the protection of the outer space environment. Iraq supported the inclusion of the subject of space debris in the agenda of the Committee at its next session so that there could be an exchange of information and so that Member States could be made aware of the dangers of the problem.

56. The developing countries must not be deprived of the benefits of space technology, and suitable opportunities must be provided for them to develop their capacities in that field. The cost of obtaining remote sensing data must be reduced so that they would be available to all the developing countries at a reasonable price. Agreement must be reached on the definition and delimitation of outer space and on the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries.

57. The use of nuclear power sources continued to be one of the chief problems threatening the safety both of outer space and of the Earth. His delegation supported the view that nuclear power sources should not be used in satellites, particularly those in low Earth orbit.

58. Progress in the field of space communications in the developing countries remained slow, and there should be more international training programmes aimed at developing their expertise and capacities in that field. Iraq stressed the need for the greatest possible number of developing countries to participate in the joint World Space Congress to be held by the Committee on Space Research and the International Astronautical Federation in 1992.

59. A certain limited number of countries were seeking to use outer space for purposes of espionage, particularly against third-world countries, and the United States had recently announced that it had launched a satellite to spy on Iraq.

(Mr. Kadrat, Iraq)

That indicated that outer space was being used for military purposes against the third world, and what was happening to Iraq could also happen to the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Outer space should be used for exclusively peaceful purposes, and activities relating to those purposes should be governed by constructive co-operation, the legitimate interests of all countries should be guaranteed, and any problems that might arise should be solved amicably and peacefully.

AGENDA ITEM 77: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued) (A/SPC/45/L.14)

60. Mr. MARTINEZ (Cuba) said that his delegation had decided to withdraw draft resolution A/SPC/45/L.14. In its place, he proposed the following draft decision: "Requests the Secretary-General to take into account the need to intensify the dissemination of information on decolonization, in the framework of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, when implementing programme 38 of the medium-term plan of the United Nations for the period 1992-1997."

61. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to consider the Cuban proposal at the morning meeting on Tuesday, 20 November.

62. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

63. The CHAIRMAN announced that the list of speakers for item 76, "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects" was now open.

64. In addition, he reminded members that regulation 4.9 of the Regulations Governing Programme Planning stipulated that no competent body should take a decision involving a change in the programme budget approved by the General Assembly or possible expenditure without a statement of programme budget implications. Main Committees must thus allow sufficient time, a minimum of 48 hours, for such a statement to be prepared and then considered by the relevant organs (Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and Fifth Committee). The General Assembly had decided that the target date for the conclusion of the work of the Main Committees was 30 November. Accordingly, the deadline for submission to the Fifth Committee of all draft resolutions with programme budget implications had been set as 21 November. He therefore urged all delegations to submit their draft resolutions no later than by the end of Tuesday, 20 November 1990.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
17th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 20 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 17th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda)

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AGENDA ITEM 76: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 76: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (A/45/217, 330, 493/Add.1, 502, 572, 594 and 602)

1. Mr. KIRSCH (Canada), speaking as Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations and Chairman of the Special Committee's open-ended working group, introduced the Special Committee's report (A/45/330). He said that the centrality of peace-keeping operations to the United Nations reflected a commitment dating back to the founding of the Organization. Canada's involvement in such operations was a key element of its foreign policy.

2. In recent years the United Nations had brought peace to a number of troubled regions and facilitated national reconciliation in others, successes which had led to heightened awareness of the diverse capabilities and effectiveness of peace-keeping operations. The increasing scope, complexity and number of such operations necessitated more active consideration of their future role and efficiency.

3. The work of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations over the preceding year had benefited from the positive political climate and increasing recognition of the importance of ensuring the effectiveness of peace-keeping operations. The appendix to the Special Committee's report, containing a streamlined compilation of proposals put forward by Member States, reflected the concerns that adequate human, physical and financial resources should be available, that peace-keeping operations should be as well prepared and effective as possible and that such operations should achieve their objectives. He drew the Committee's attention to the Special Committee's conclusions and recommendations in respect of the issues dealt with in the appendix.

4. In order to facilitate the preparation by the Secretary-General of an indicative registry of potential contributions of personnel, material, resources and services, the Special Committee had reiterated its invitation to Member States to complete the questionnaire prepared by the Secretary-General as soon as possible. The Special Committee, had also called on all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time, stressed the need to reimburse troop-contributing countries, recommended that priority consideration should be given to securing financing of the start-up phase of peace-keeping operations and encouraged the continued quest for efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

5. The standardization of peace-keeping operations and co-ordination with host countries was of interest to the Special Committee, which had specifically urged host countries to safeguard the security of peace-keeping personnel. Member States had also been urged to conclude status-of-forces agreements as soon as possible upon the establishment of peace-keeping operations. In that connection the model agreement prepared by the Secretariat (A/45/594) was a welcome development. With regard to training, the seminars on peace-keeping operations had been useful, and further seminars should be conducted. The Special Committee had also reaffirmed

(Mr. Kirsch, Canada)

the need to discuss possible new fields for peace-keeping operations and their further development.

6. The Special Committee had determined that the composition of peace-keeping operations should be on a wide geographical basis, consistent with the particular requirements of each operation. A report on the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) operation had been requested as being helpful in preparing similar operations. The Special Committee had stated the need to encourage the application of high technology to peace-keeping operations as a means of increasing their efficiency. In the light of the international recognition conferred on the peace-keeping forces by the awarding of the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1988, it had recommended consideration of ways of honouring the services of those concerned.

7. The Special Committee had emphasized the need for more exchanges of information and expertise among Member States and the Organization. Given the need for close contacts between the Secretariat and Member States, the preparation of a factual report detailing the functions of the Secretariat units dealing with peace-keeping operations would be helpful, as would regular informal briefings on current and potential operations. Contributions from individuals and bodies with relevant expertise would be welcome. States should be encouraged to hold informal consultations on the practical aspects of peace-keeping. The importance of co-operative communication for maximum effectiveness could not be over-emphasized.

8. With regard to the Special Committee's methods of work, continued attempts to consider the whole spectrum of issues involved in a comprehensive review of peace-keeping were likely to lead to repetition, since those issues which had not yet been dealt with effectively did not lend themselves to quick solutions. The time had come to consider fewer items in greater depth. Further, the gap between the end of the Special Committee's general debate and the beginning of the work of the working group, which arose because of the time required by the Bureau to streamline proposals made by delegations as a basis for the working group's work, should be shortened by undertaking some preparatory work in advance of the session.

9. Speaking as the representative of Canada, he welcomed the statement of requirements for peace-keeping operations (A/45/217) and the questionnaire based thereon. The Secretariat might, however, need to modify the questionnaire to reflect differing circumstances and include civilian resources, since the Secretary-General's report on the use of civilian personnel (A/45/502) identified definite roles for civilians in peace-keeping operations. Amalgamation of the relevant reports and questionnaire into one document would complement the report on reserve stocks (A/45/493/Add.1). The training guidelines (A/45/572) and standard operating procedures (A/45/602) should prove to be of practical assistance to States and missions in the field.

10. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on reserve stocks (A/45/493/Add.1), which advocated physical holdings by the United Nations of equipment and the development of computerized inventory records, the same data base

(Mr. Kirsch, Canada)

could be expanded to reflect stockpiles held in storage by Member States that were potentially available to the Secretariat. The United Nations would then have its own physical inventory plus possible access to additional stocks.

11. He welcomed the preparation of reports on the UNTAG, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) operations. Such reviews ensured that specific mandates were manageable and that the Organization was getting value for money. Canada wished to contribute to the consideration of overhead remote sensing in peace-keeping operations, perhaps by participating in an experiment in the field. His delegation was studying the personnel and political aspects of applying high technology to peace-keeping. Canada also intended to pursue, in the Security Council, the long-standing contradiction in the financing of UNFICYP. The inadequacies of the current arrangement must be changed.

12. In conclusion, he reaffirmed Canada's strong commitment to peace-keeping operations, and expressed hope that the draft resolution on peace-keeping operations would be adopted by consensus.

13. Mr. SUMI (Japan) said it was a matter of satisfaction that the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had again made genuine progress during the past year. In view of the increasing importance of peace-keeping operations and the strong international interest in them, it was again appropriate to undertake a comprehensive review of their various aspects in order to further enhance their effectiveness.

14. During the past year the Special Committee had produced a set of specific conclusions and recommendations, and the draft resolution before the Committee, which was based on those conclusions and recommendations, should serve as a basis for further discussions on peace-keeping operations. His delegation hoped that it would gain the Committee's unanimous support.

15. Discussions on peace-keeping operations had now reached a turning point, and it would be appropriate at present for the Special Committee to discuss, in greater depth, a limited number of specific aspects of peace-keeping operations. That was, in fact, the course laid down in the draft resolution. It gave the officers of the Special Committee a mandate to prepare a working document for the Special Committee's next session, which was important in ensuring that the discussions would be substantive; invited Member States to submit observations and suggestions on a limited number of specific items for more detailed considerations by the Special Committee; and provided that the Special Committee should conclude its discussions within a limited period of time.

16. Throughout the past year the international community had come to have ever-greater expectations of the ability of the United Nations to settle conflicts. When its peace-keeping efforts were successful, the Organization's prestige was enhanced, and that in turn enabled it to discharge the tasks entrusted to it in a smoother and more effective manner. It was therefore incumbent upon the

(Mr. Sumi, Japan)

United Nations, and particularly the Special Committee, to consider urgently ways and means to ensure the effectiveness of its peace-keeping operations.

17. Among the most important conditions determining the success of peace-keeping operations was the co-operation of the parties in conflict. His delegation wished to emphasize that host countries and other directly interested parties should extend all possible support in order to facilitate the deployment and functioning of peace-keeping operations and that, as soon as possible after the establishment of the operation, the host country should conclude a status of forces agreement with the United Nations specifying the level of expense that country was expected to cover.

18. Whenever the Security Council took a decision to establish a new peace-keeping operation, financing for start-up costs and other initial activities should be readily available. In order to meet that need, the Secretary-General had established the Trust Fund in Support of United Nations Peace-making and Peace-keeping Activities. His Government, which was highly appreciative of that initiative, had in the past and current year contributed a total of $US 5.0 million to the Fund. It was hoped that as many Member States as possible would likewise be able to support the Fund.

19. His delegation considered it appropriate to study the possibility of making greater use of civilian personnel in peace-keeping activities. The Secretary-General had issued a helpful report (A/45/502) on the matter, and his Government was conducting careful studies to strengthen its own contribution to peace-keeping operations in the matter of personnel by enacting domestic regulations as necessary.

20. His delegation was deeply grateful to the countries contributing personnel to the various United Nations peace-keeping operations, and to the men and women in the field. Japan supported the Secretary-General's efforts to enhance peace-keeping operations and was determined to continue to contribute to their further enhancement.

21. Mr. FIGUEROA (Chile) said that the primary purpose of the United Nations was the maintenance of international peace and security and the adoption of collective measures to prevent or eliminate threats to it. Because historical factors had impeded the Security Council's ability to carry out that function, Member States had sought and collectively resorted to means other than those provided for in the Charter. The peace-keeping operations of the United Nations had thus taken shape over time, on the basis of the experience gained in succeeding operations. Because of the variety of those operations, it was difficult to draw any general conclusions from them. Moreover, it was difficult to give organic structure to an ad hoc Charter mechanism intended to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and international security. That was why the study undertaken by the Special Committee was particularly complex.

(Mr. Figueroa, Chile)

22. The present international situation had opened a broad range of possibilities for co-operation in which peace-keeping operations offered a means by which the United Nations could act effectively to deal with various problems. Nevertheless, it was to be hoped that in the new era of international understanding, the concept of the rule of law in international relations and the final renunciation of the use or threat of force as a way to resolve disputes would gain new strength.

23. The Secretary-General's comments on the opportunity offered by the new international atmosphere for a long-term vision and political will which would transcend current concerns in order to work out a consistent strategy for the establishment, maintenance and construction of peace were interesting and relevant in that connection. In such a strategy, peace-keeping operations would occupy an important place. The five operations initiated in only two years were a demonstration of the degree of confidence the international community and the Security Council had acquired in such operations as an effective way to deal with conflict situations. His delegation was grateful for the work carried out by UNTAG and the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA). The latter mission had also shown the complexity of such operations; it had been established originally only to verify the implementation of the Esquipulas agreements, but the political circumstances in the area had led the Security Council to broaden its mandate to cover new functions and fields of action.

24. In the present world political context, the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had acquired a new dimension. Its work was followed with special interest, even outside the United Nations, and its conclusions studied and analysed carefully. His delegation supported the ideas contained in the report which the Special Committee had submitted, although they might require further elaboration in later documents. The establishment of a register of possible contributions of personnel, equipment and services by Member States would be a useful instrument for the Secretariat in meeting the needs occasioned by a peace-keeping operation. The conclusions reached by the Special Committee concerning the various aspects of financing and the level of participation incumbent on countries in accordance with their responsibilities constituted an important step forward. It was a major requirement for the success of such operations that they should be provided with a solid and secure financial base, as the Cyprus operation convincingly illustrated.

25. One aspect of the subject which should be studied carefully was the new areas which peace operations might cover. Recent operations had made use of observer and investigatory missions which carried out a mixture of civic, police and military functions. The Special Committee should explore the new areas to which peace operations could be extended and whether they were compatible with the functions and powers of the Security Council. The United Nations was in urgent need of carefully worked-out guidelines and well-defined mandates for such operations, and it was for the Committee to meet that need. His delegation supported the renewal of the Special Committee's mandate in order to do so.

26. Mr. TRAXLER (Italy), speaking on behalf of the European Community, said that its member States were heartened by recent developments favourable to the United

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

Nations in carrying out its statutory function of maintaining and restoring international peace and security and particularly welcomed the way in which peace-keeping operations had become an integral component of the Organization's effectiveness. They were particularly encouraged by the newly found unity of purpose of all the members of the Security Council, which enhanced the credibility and efficiency of the United Nations, and took note with satisfaction of the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 30 May 1990.

27. The five new operations established since 1988, particularly the remarkable successes of UNTAG and ONUCA in difficult circumstances, and the future prospects for Cambodia and Western Sahara, had spread new confidence throughout the community of nations. The ongoing tasks of UNIFIL and UNFICYP remained indispensable in spite of their persistent financial difficulties. It was therefore more important than ever to draw the appropriate lessons from the experience acquired, as peace-keeping operations were called upon to take on new roles and responsibilities. Current circumstances suggested that the "blue helmets" should evolve from their pragmatic functions towards a more structured existence, while preserving their flexibility and ability to adapt to different and changing circumstances.

28. The Twelve congratulated the Secretary-General and the staff of the United Nations on their efforts in behalf of the international community. The Secretary-General was also to be commended for his comprehensive review of the requirements of peace-keeping operations in his report on the Organization's work (A/45/1) and in documents A/45/217, A/45/502 and A/45/594, as well as the updated version of The Blue Helmets. The Twelve looked forward to the further reports and provisions requested in General Assembly resolution 44/49 and announced by the Secretary-General, which would constitute the first broad overview of its kind, and provide Member States with the criteria needed to ensure valuable and timely contributions. The Secretary-General's recommendations made a constructive contribution to dialogue on those matters, in which the Twelve had actively participated, and his reports would inspire them in the further deliberations designed to provide the United Nations with the best possible instruments to prevent and contain disputes endangering international peace and security.

29. In the rapidly changing world, the peaceful settlement of disputes was gaining widespread acceptance, and peace-keeping forces were called upon to undertake a broader role and diversified tasks involving civilian and administrative personnel alongside military observers. As provisional arrangements, such operations were not a substitute for peace or for the search for a political settlement to the underlying conflict. However, in some cases experience had shown that no one could foresee how long they might be required.

30. While recognizing the principle that peace-keeping should only be undertaken with the consent of the host countries and the co-operation of all parties concerned, the Twelve urged them to assist the successful and safe deployment and functioning of peace-keeping operations in order to permit the fulfilment of the mission's mandate.

(Mr. Traxler, Italy)

31. The Twelve had always been and would continue to be in the forefront of peace-keeping efforts throughout the world. They were therefore particularly concerned that proper conditions should exist to ensure the most efficient and cost-effective operations. New ways must be sustained with new measures, both financial and structural. The report of the Special Committee (A/45/330) correctly underlined six essential elements of peace-keeping operations requiring constant attention: material and financial resources, legal and operative aspects, institutional support, prospective uses and the overall political context. The financial basis must be established more soundly and securely, not only in terms of full and timely payment of assessed contributions but with the provision of adequate human and material resources. Promptness of action might be increasingly facilitated by contributions for start-up costs in support of the Secretary-General's fact-finding and observer missions. The efficiency of missions must also involve cost-effectiveness through economies of scale, while preserving the necessary flexibility. That implied the standardization available resources, formation processes, administrative and operating procedures and the agreements between the Secretariat, contributing countries and host countries for infrastructural and security purposes. The Twelve therefore welcomed measures taken by the Secretary-General to strengthen the co-ordination of United Nations bodies involved in peace-keeping operations, and in particular the establishment of the Senior Planning and Monitoring Group. Consultations with United Nations member countries on the numerous practical aspects should accordingly be promoted, in order to ensure the best and widest possible national contributions while respecting the statutory responsibilities of the United Nations.

32. Increasingly, in future contingencies, Member States would converge in undertaking their responsibilities for the maintenance of peace and security, building on the experience acquired by the United Nations over more than four decades. The Twelve, in supporting the draft resolution before the Committee, confirmed their commitment to future peace-keeping and intended to contribute to their utmost in assisting the Secretary-General to prepare, implement and conclude in the most effective way the present operations and any future commitment in preserving international peace and security.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
18th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 21 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 18th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. POSSO SERRANO (Ecuador)
(Vice-Chairman)

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AGENDA ITEM 75: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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28 November 1990

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Posso Serrano (Ecuador), Vice-Chairman took the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 75: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES (A/45/84, 306, 576, 608-614; S/21919)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a number of letters on the item, issued as documents A/45/72, 93, 114, 116, 121, 122, 175, 192, 253, 258, 260, 283, 285, 288, 290, 295, 311, 317, 326, 333 and Corr.1, 360, 421, 506, 532, 534, 596, 650, 655, 703, 704, 722 and 727.

2. Mr. PERERA (Sri Lanka), speaking as Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, introduced the report of the Special Committee (A/45/576). He said that in preparing its report the Special Committee had taken care to rely on information that had not been contradicted by the Government of Israel. While the Governments of Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic and the representatives of Palestine had co-operated with the Special Committee, the Government of Israel had declined to do so. Accordingly, the Special Committee had not been able to visit the occupied territories, and had based its report on oral information from people having first-hand knowledge of the situation and on written information from various sources, including the Governments concerned.

3. The report reflected the human-rights situation in the occupied territories, including the administration of justice, treatment of civilians and economic and social conditions. It also referred to various restrictions on the enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms, and dealt with the activities of settlers, the treatment of detainees and the question of annexation.

4. The general conclusion reached by the Special Committee was that repression had hardened and that the already precarious human-rights situation of civilians in the occupied territories had worsened. The underlying reality was that the occupation itself constituted a violation of human rights. Yet Israel had gone beyond occupation and had annexed parts of the territories, and had then proceeded to confiscate property, expel Palestinians and transfer Israeli citizens to the territories, in violation of its obligations under the fourth Geneva Convention.

5. The Israeli authorities were determined to quell the uprising and had resorted to increasingly harsh measures, including shootings, beatings and the use of tear-gas, often at random. The result had been a heavy toll of civilian casualties, including children.

(Mr. Perera, Sri Lanka)

6. There had been a further deterioration in the administration of justice. Arab civilians continued to be denied adequate legal guarantees or fair trials, whereas Israelis charged with ill-treating or killing Arabs were often treated with disproportionate leniency. Arab civilians continued to suffer collective punishments, such as the demolition of houses, economic sanctions and prolonged curfews. New expulsion measures had been taken.

7. During the reporting period, Israel had continued to settle new immigrants in the occupied territories, settlers who had harassed Arab civilians. There had been increasing allegations of torture and ill-treatment of detainees. Fundamental freedoms had been hampered by travel bans, interference with the freedom of religion, and the harassment of journalists.

8. The result had been a further increase in tension in the occupied territories to a very dangerous level. The killings in Jerusalem in October, and the reprisals in Gaza following the death of an Israeli reservist in September, had shocked the international community.

9. The extreme gravity of the situation had led the Special Committee to stress the need to arrive, through negotiations, at a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, taking into account the rights of all the peoples of the area. There must be no further delay in improving the tragic conditions prevailing in the occupied territories. To that end, the Special Committee recommended urgent measures to safeguard human rights in the occupied territories, including the full application by Israel of the relevant provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention; full compliance with all pertinent resolutions of the United Nations and specialized agencies; the convening of an international conference under United Nations auspices; the full co-operation of the Israeli authorities with the International Committee of the Red Cross, and full support by Member States for its activities; support for UNRWA activities in the occupied territories; and co-operation on the part of Israel with UNRWA as well as respect for its privileges and immunities.

10. Mr. MANSOUR (Observer for Palestine) said that the reports of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories gave a clear picture of the situation in the occupied territories of Palestine and the Syrian Arab Golan. They showed that the systematic brutality of the Israeli occupant against the Palestinian people had intensified with the aim of annexing all of Palestine and expelling the Palestinian people. Israel had annexed Jerusalem in 1967, proclaiming it the capital of Israel, and had since considered any intervention by the United Nations regarding Jerusalem as interference in its internal affairs.

11. In its twenty-second report (A/45/576), the Special Committee had concluded that the policy of Israel towards occupied Palestine continued to be one of de facto annexation, in flagrant violation of Israel's obligations under the fourth Geneva Convention. There had been a constant escalation of repression, resulting in hundreds of civilians killed and increasing casualties among children, as

(Mr. Mansour, Observer, Palestine)

confirmed by the report of the Swedish Save the Children Fund of January 1990. There had been massacres at Rishon-le-Zion in May 1990 and at the Haram al-Sharif in October 1990. People had been beaten and their bones broken; tear-gas had been used in confined areas and adequate medical care had been denied. Serious psychological damage had resulted from the climate of fear. Children had been traumatized. Tens of thousands of Palestinians had been arrested, often without charge, and detainees had been tortured. Palestinians had been expelled and there was a new punitive measure of "conditional banishment". There had been collective punishments, prolonged curfews and economic sanctions. Houses had been demolished. There had been restrictions on the freedoms of movement, religion, expression and education. There was censorship, and newspapers had been closed and journalists harassed. There had been prolonged closures of academic institutions. Israeli settlers had continued their acts of violence against the civilian population and there had been illegal expropriation of Palestinian land in order to establish new Zionist settlements or expand existing ones. Tension had reached a very dangerous level, and if urgent measures were not taken, it could result in a major explosion.

12. The Special Committee had stressed the need to negotiate a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict which would take into account the rights of all peoples in the area, including the national rights of the Palestinian people. It had also recommended the full application by Israel of the relevant provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention, full compliance with all United Nations resolutions on Palestine and the convening of an international conference under United Nations auspices with the participation of all the parties concerned.

13. The Secretary-General's report (S/21919), submitted to the Security Council in accordance with resolution 672 (1990), had corroborated the report of the Special Committee. In its resolution 673 (1990), the Security Council had deplored the Israeli Government's refusal to receive the mission of the Secretary-General. Furthermore, the General Assembly had repeatedly deplored Israel's constant refusal to allow the Special Committee access to occupied Palestine, and had condemned its refusal to allow persons from occupied Palestine to appear as witnesses before the Special Committee.

14. The intifadah would soon enter its fourth year and the Palestinian people had recently celebrated the second anniversary of the proclamation of the State of Palestine. As the intifadah continued to gain strength, Israeli repression was becoming increasingly savage. However, such repression had not contained the intifadah, whose goals were the end of occupation and the attainment of full sovereignty for the State of Palestine.

15. The Security Council was called upon to act urgently to provide international protection for occupied Palestine and to invoke measures under Chapter VII of the Charter in order to force Israel to comply with its obligations. The placing of occupied Palestine under United Nations supervision for a limited period would

(Mr. Mansour, Observer, Palestine)

constitute a major step towards a just and comprehensive peace. Israel's escalation of repression had been accompanied by aggressive political manoeuvering, which had United States support.

16. On 7 November 1990, his delegation had urged the Security Council to establish a United Nations observer force to be dispatched to the occupied Palestinian territory. Palestine also hoped for immediate implementation of General Assembly resolution 44/42 once the negative position of Israel and the United States changed. He hoped that the Security Council would adopt very soon a draft resolution on the convening of the International Peace Conference.

17. Mr. FAWZY (Egypt) said that the yearly discussions of Israeli practices in the occupied territories had thus far had no tangible results, which was an indication of Israel's disregard of international will. Israel had ignored General Assembly resolutions urging it to respect the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and to collaborate with the Special Committee by allowing it to visit the occupied territories, which Israel had constantly refused to do. In spite of such obstacles, the Special Committee had helped to shed light on Israel's arbitrary policies and practices, which had resulted in deteriorating conditions for the Palestinian population. Israel had evaded its responsibilities as an occupying Power under international law and the fourth Geneva Convention.

18. The report of the Special Committee (A/45/576) described in detail the tragedy of the Palestinian people resulting from Israel's continuing repression. Israel continued to use live ammunition and tear-gas against Palestinian demonstrators. Even schools and hospitals had not escaped Israeli violence. Israel continued to use collective punishments, destroy Palestinian houses, impose curfews, confiscate property, prevent the export of Palestinian produce and hinder freedom of movement. Israel arrested Palestinians, maltreated them and prevented them from preparing their legal defence.

19. The goal of such measures was the annexation of the occupied territories. Israel continued to establish settlements and to expel Palestinians. Israel had intervened in the educational system by controlling syllabuses and closing academic institutions in an attempt to destroy the cultural heritage of the Palestinian people and thus threaten its identity. The report had also noted an increase in the number of unpunished violent acts by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians.

20. His delegation had been severely shaken by the events of the previous month at the Haram al-Sharif, which had underscored the urgent need to provide protection to the Palestinian people; any delay might lead to further loss of life and increased tension. He expressed support for the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report (S/21919) concerning the provision of protection, and in particular the idea of calling for a meeting of the parties to the fourth Geneva Convention to discuss the question of protection.

21. Egypt would continue to condemn such practices and to urge Israel to halt them and to recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people as a first step

(Mr. Fawzy, Egypt)

towards serious negotiations on the basis of the Security Council resolutions on Palestine.

22. The Middle East was passing through a critical phase. Israel must realize that violence, repression and collective punishment would not ensure its security, but rather fuel extremism and confrontation. Arbitrary repression of the intifadah could only inflame the Palestinian struggle. Israel's current policy threatened to undermine all efforts aimed at dialogue between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. Israel should abide by the fourth Geneva Convention and take steps to build confidence between the two peoples. In its efforts to end the tragedy of the Palestinian people, Egypt would continue to strive for the exercise by the Palestinian peoples of its right to self-determination.

23. Mr. SCIALOJA (Italy), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its twelve member States, said that the severe deterioration in the human-rights situation in the occupied territories was a direct consequence of the worsening political climate, which made it more necessary than ever to find a negotiated solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The crisis in the Persian Gulf should not prevent the international community from beginning a political process aimed at a just, comprehensive and lasting peace, in conformity with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

24. The Twelve stressed their intention to work towards such a settlement, and repeated their support for the convening of an international peace conference under United Nations auspices. The European Community supported the right of all the States of the region to exist within secure and recognized borders, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), as well as justice for all the peoples of the region, including the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people.

25. Any change in the demographic structure of the occupied territories contravened international law and undermined the peace process. The establishment of new settlements was the reverse of the kind of confidence-building measure which could contribute to a peaceful solution. The Twelve reaffirmed the right to liberty of movement, in accordance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In that connection they supported the right of Jews to emigrate to Israel, but not at the expense of the rights of the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

26. The European Community considered Israel's unilateral decisions to modify the status of Jerusalem and to impose its jurisdiction over the occupied Syrian Arab Golan as null and void, and reaffirmed the particular importance of Jerusalem. Access to places of worship must be safeguarded in any future agreement on Jerusalem. The Twelve also called on Israel to meet its obligations under the fourth Geneva Convention.

27. The Twelve had noted an alarming increase in the level of violence in the occupied territories. The level of force employed by Israel in response to violent

(Mr. Scialoja, Italy)

protests had often been excessive, as typified by the incidents in October 1990 in Jerusalem.

28. With regard to the report submitted by the Secretary-General to the Security Council (S/21919), the Twelve regretted the refusal of the Israeli authorities to receive the Secretary-General's mission, and agreed that steps should be taken to ensure the safety of the Palestinian civilians under Israeli occupation. The Twelve also deplored incidents of violence against Israeli civilians in the occupied territories. It was imperative to break the cycle of violence; all parties had a responsibility to refrain from any act which might impede dialogue and negotiation.

29. The European Community had long deplored Israel's collective punishments and reprisals and condemned the policy of deportations from the occupied territories, in violation of the fourth Geneva Convention. The Twelve were particularly concerned about the prolonged closure of educational establishments, including UNRWA schools. The Community hoped that all universities would be reopened promptly. The obstacles to the normal functioning of the health-care system, including the activities of UNRWA, were also of serious concern to the Community.

30. The Twelve had taken a number of measures to assist the population of the occupied territories and help preserve the future of Palestinian society. The Twelve were the major donors to UNRWA, in addition to which the Community had given preferential treatment to exports originating in the occupied territories with the aim of reducing unemployment. Moreover, the Community had decided, at the Dublin summit of June 1990, to more than double its aid to the population of the occupied territories to some $17 million.

31. The United Nations could and should play a role in protecting the Arab population of the occupied territories. The Twelve supported all efforts by the Organization to break the cycle of hatred and confrontation and establish a constructive climate. It was clear that only a comprehensive political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict would end the sufferings of the Palestinian people. It was a further injustice that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait had delayed the quest for a solution. The Twelve stood ready to contribute to a comprehensive, just and lasting solution.

32. Mr. INBAR (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that in the light of the repeated references to the Palestinian resistance and the intifadah, it would be useful to clarify the real causes of the current unrest. In a leaflet recently distributed in the occupied territories, Yasser Arafat had said that the PLO's struggle was not for a political settlement and that its professed desire to negotiate a settlement was only a political cover for its revolutionary intentions. Those intentions were and had always been the destruction of the State of Israel.

33. The situation in the territories administered by Israel was a source of concern for his Government, but what was actually going on there had been

(Mr. Inbar, Israel)

systematically distorted in the statements the Committee had just heard. The acts of violence being committed by Arabs had been disregarded, although they were widespread and serious. The shocking silence about them maintained by those who claimed to be the protectors of the Palestinians was most blatant with regard to the reign of terror unleashed against fellow Palestinians by the PLO, which had already claimed 350 lives, with many more wounded. There could be no clearer demonstration that the PLO was a terrorist organization.

34. The Israeli authorities for their part had made a long series of goodwill gestures. But when calm prevailed in the territories it was perceived as a direct threat by the PLO, which fomented disorder and violence in order to gain its ends. In a region marked by instability, the PLO could not be a reliable partner for negotiations; that was a risk Israel simply could not take. For those reasons, Israel had proposed a negotiating process which emphasized direct negotiations between the parties in Israel and the occupied territories.

35. Mr. MANSOUR (Observer for Palestine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that if he wished to dwell on the past he could provide the Committee with a great deal of information about the proven terrorist record of the current Prime Minister of Israel and at least two members of his Cabinet. But the PLO did not wish to dwell on or remain in the past; it wished to move forward to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. The situation was clearly one of occupation, and the Palestinian people were suffering from that occupation. The representative of Israel had referred to elections, but the last elections Israel had permitted - and that only at the local level - had been in 1976, and most of the officials elected had since been removed by the Israeli authorities. If Israel wanted elections, why did it not hold them immediately? Its adversary in the current dispute was not Arafat or the PLO, it was the entire United Nations. The PLO wanted negotiations, within the context of an international conference, and hoped Israel would heed its call to begin that process.

36. Mr. KADRAT (Iraq), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Israeli aggression and refusal to reach a peaceful settlement needed no further proof. The Palestinian people under the PLO would continue its struggle. For its part, Iraq had repeatedly presented proposals for reaching a regional settlement on a basis of equality, all of which had been rejected.

37. Mr. INBAR (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, in view of what was going on in the world at the present moment, for a representative of Iraq to speak of settlement, negotiations and terrorism required no reply.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
19th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 21 November 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda)

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AGENDA ITEM 76: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued)

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4 December 1990
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The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 76: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued) (A/45/330, A/45/217, A/45/502, A/45/594, A/45/602, A/SPC/45/L.26

1. Mr. BASNYAT (Nepal) recalled that Nepal, with its unswerving commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations, had consistently supported peace-keeping operations and was an active participant in those operations. Many Nepalese soldiers had laid down their lives for the cause of peace. Currently, Nepal was a participant in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and supplied personnel to the Office of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

2. The United Nations had had to resort to peace-keeping operations as a means of controlling dangerous regional conflicts at a time when relations between the super-Powers prevented the Security Council from functioning as envisaged in the Charter. From a stopgap measure at the beginning, the peace-keeping technique had become a very effective instrument in practice.

3. The recent striking developments on the international political scene had been accompanied almost everywhere by a reassertion of people's rights. In Nepal, a new Constitution had been promulgated, which reflected the democratice aspirations of the people and guaranteed the rights and freedoms enshrined in the United Nations Charter. The importance attributed to peace by the people of Nepal clearly stemmed from the basic principles proclaimed therein.

4. Despite the constraints it faced as a landlocked, least developed and non-oil-producing country, Nepal was participating in peace-keeping operations. As a troop-contributing country, it had a number of recommendations to make. It saw a need to strengthen the capacity and efficacy of the operations, to mobilize sufficient funds to improve co-ordination and organization, to develop guidelines to ensure the safety of personnel assigned to the operations and to provide the necessary logistical assistance.

5. The major aspects of the problem of financing peace-keeping operations and the reasons for the delay in reimbursing troop-contributing countries had been clearly spelled out in the publication "Blue Helmets", which described in graphic detail United Nations peace-keeping operations over the period 1948 to 1990. Another concern was the shortfall in the UNIFIL Special Account, which, according to the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council (S/21102), had reached $318 million as at 1 January 1990. It should be borne in mind in that connection that States were obligated to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time.

6. The Secretary-General's reports on requirements for the United Nations peace-keeping operations (A/45/217) and on the model status of forces agreement for those operations (A/45/594) were particularly useful and his delegation welcomed them.

(Mr. Basnyat, Nepal)

7. For many conflicts that seemed intractable, peace-keeping operations provided a dignified and inexpensive way out. With the improved international political climate and the resurgence of confidence in the United Nations role, they would undoubtedly be brought into play increasingly in the years to come.

8. Mr. AHMED (Nigeria) expressed great satisfaction with the progress made by the United Nations in peace-keeping, in particular the successful operation of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia and of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) in Nicaragua. Those accomplishments had been facilitated by the attitude of the permanent members of the Security Council which, for the first time in history, had adopted a common position on peace-keeping.

9. He paid a tribute to the Special Committee, its Working Group and its Bureau for effectively discharging their mandate and to the Secretariat for its very valuable support. The Secretary-General's reports on requirements for the peace-keeping operations (A/45/217) and on the use of civilian personnel (A/45/502) had been especially useful.

10. Nigeria, as Chairman of the Special Committee, attached the greatest importance to peace-keeping operations because they represented the most practical application of United Nations efforts to preserve international peace and security. It was participating actively in many United Nations peace-keeping operations as well as in regional and subregional efforts, the most recent in Liberia under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

11. A solution of the problem of financing peace-keeping operations was urgently needed. Among other measures, his delegation called for a substantial increase in voluntary contributions and renewed the appeal it had made at the forty-second session of the General Assembly for the establishment of a Special Fund for Peace-Keeping Operations to be placed at the disposal of the Secretary-General in order to guarantee the financing of the start-up phases of operations.

12. The spectacular political developments in some parts of the world over the past year had created a climate favourable to peace-keeping operations. Other developments underlined the imperative need for such operations as well as their potentialities. In the past two years, five operations had been undertaken and two more were expected to be launched for Western Sahara and in Cambodia. Nigeria was willing to participate actively in those undertakings.

13. The draft resolution relating to peace-keeping (A/SPC/45/L.26) was comprehensive and reflected the recommendations and conclusions of the Special Committee. Its adoption would enable the Special Committee to continue its work in the coming year. It was therefore to be hoped that it would be unanimously supported by the members of the Committee.

14. He concluded by paying a tribute to the countries contributing troops and civilian personnel for the peace-keeping forces.

15. Mr. MAKKAWI (Lebanon) said that the winds of change in Europe and elsewhere and the increased co-operation among the super-Powers and the permanent Members of the Security Council were unlikely to result in a general preference for the system of collective measures as outlined in Chapter VII of the Charter to the detriment of a system of peace-keeping operations; the latter still offered more options in terms of flexibility, co-operation and consent. The international community's interest in peace-keeping operations was steadily growing. Of the 18 operations initiated by the United Nations since 1948, five had been launched in the past two years. Moreover, such operations had become far more complex, involving not only peace-keeping but also peace-making. The ambitious mission carried out in Namibia, with its co-ordination of civilian, police and military components, had been a far cry from the single-task missions of the previous 30 years.

16. As the Secretary-General pointed out in his latest report on the work of the Organization, such complex operations took long planning and preparation, while the implementation of a settlement required urgency as soon as it was agreed upon. It was therefore essential that peace-keeping operations should be carefully prepared and all the necessary human, material and financial resources should be speedily allocated.

17. Despite the dramatic improvements on the international political and social scene, the Middle East region remained a source of instability and potential conflict. The results of peace-keeping operations in the region were mixed. The implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) was bringing the role of the United Nations Iraq-Iran Military Observer Group to an end. On the other hand, the situation of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon remained deadlocked. Twelve years after its inception, UNIFIL was still unable to fulfil its mandate as set forth in Security Council resolution 425 (1978) because of Israel's continuing occupation of southern Lebanon. Until recently, the Israeli Government had claimed that the Israeli presence in Lebanon was a temporary arrangement necessary for ensuring the security of northern Israel so long as the Lebanese Government was not able to exercise effective authority. But on a recent tour of occupied southern Lebanon, the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Moshe Arens, had said: "Israel will not let the Lebanese Government regain control of the area the Israelis claimed a 'security zone' in southern Lebanon ... The defence of Israel's northern border is based on Israeli and South Lebanon Army (SLA) control of the security zone and the Jezzin area. We are not planning any change whatsoever in the level of this control". Viewed in the context of recent developments in the Lebanese situation, that statement showed that Israel had never intended to withdraw from southern Lebanon.

18. It was deplorable that Lebanon, a founding member of the United Nations, should have part of its territory occupied by Israel since 1978 without any trace of action on the part of the international community. Israel's creation of a civilian administration in southern Lebanon demonstrated that the situation was not the result of any act of war, but formed part of a deliberate policy of creeping annexation of an area rich in water resources.

(Mr. Makkawi, Lebanon)

19. The instability in the Israeli-occupied area did not stem from Lebanese rivalries but from the occupation of Lebanese land. The calm and tranquillity prevailing in the adjacent sectors under UNIFIL control clearly underlined that fact. Lebanese resistance to occupation would continue in the coming months, fed by the occupying Power's violent and arbitrary practices.

20. As the Secretary-General had pointed out, lasting peace would come to the Middle East only when the principles of international law governed the relations between States in the region. Since 1978, Israel had continually flouted one of the most fundamental of those principles, that of sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, resorting to the force of arms to resist any attempt by the Lebanese Government to reassert its authority in the southern part of Lebanon in accordance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

21. The prospects for restoring Lebanese sovereignty in the southern part of the country occupied by Israel had greatly improved since the reunification of the Lebanese army and command. During the second stage of the normalization process, the militias would be dissolved and their weapons collected, and the army, police and security forces would implement Lebanese laws throughout Lebanese territory. An agreement bringing the region adjacent to the zone occupied by Israel under Lebanese army control had already been signed. The process of strengthening the Lebanese army was going smoothly and it would soon be possible to send well-trained army units to southern Lebanon in order to implement Security Council resolution 425 (1978) in conjunction with UNIFIL. The prospect was clearly a worrying one for Israel.

22. There were certain central conditions which had to be satisfied at the start of a peace-keeping operation, one of them being the full co-operation of the parties concerned. From the outset, Israel had been opposed to UNIFIL. The assumption had been that the Security Council, and especially the most influential of its members, would take firm action to ensure respect for its decisions. Unfortunately, that had not been the case. However, the new developments in Lebanon gave grounds for optimism as to Lebanon's ability to control and secure its borders. That should encourage members of the Security Council to take the necessary measures for the speedy implementation of Council resolution 425 (1978).

23. Mr. MADI (Egypt) said that the dialogue initiated almost three years earlier between the two super-Powers had led to the inauguration of the "post-cold-war" era. It was to be hoped that the process would be progressively consolidated, so as to culminate in the establishment of a new world order founded upon international legality. The developments taking place were having marked repercussions upon the role of the United Nations in general and in the maintenance of international peace and security in particular. Thus, of the 18 peace-keeping operations carried out by the Organization since 1948, five had been launched in 1988 and 1989. The basic difference was that those five operations were aimed not only at peace-keeping but also at peace-making. The Namibian experience, as well as the operations conducted in Central America and Afghanistan, demonstrated that the objective now was to achieve a definitive and comprehensive settlement of

(Mr. Madi, Egypt)

conflicts. There were grounds for hoping that the operations in Cambodia and Western Sahara would result in such a settlement.

24. The fact that, because a just and durable settlement of the conflict could not be reached, peace-keeping forces were still present in several regions to which they had been sent many years previously amounted to accepting the status quo and resulted from the attitude adopted by the Security Council in respect of international conflicts during the cold war. The statement of the President of the Security Council in May 1990 that a peace-keeping operation was essentially a temporary measure and that its mandate was not automatically renewable was therefore to be welcomed. He hoped that the statement concerned not only future operations but would be applied first and foremost to operations which had been in progress for many years.

25. The success of the operations in Namibia and Nicaragua gave them a new dimension which ought to be reinforced. That being said, the temptation to generalize those two experiences in order to apply them to situations which clearly lacked an international dimension and were thus the internal affairs of States, should be resisted. The technical assistance provided by the United Nations at the request of legitimate Governments when holding elections did not fall within the purview of peace-keeping operations. The Security Council had no special role to play in situations which did not threaten international peace and security. To the contrary, such action would make the issue an international one and might involve the United Nations in a civil war.

26. In 1989 and 1990, the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had undertaken a comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects. The Special Committee must now give in-depth consideration to certain well-defined aspects of the question on the basis of proposals and suggestions from Member States. The Special Committee might also base itself on the report contained in document A/45/502, on the use of civilian personnel in peace-keeping operations. It could also consider the report contained in document A/45/594, entitled "Model status-of-forces agreement for peace-keeping operations".

27. Mr. GARDEZI (Pakistan) recalled that three peace-keeping operations had already taken place in his country and thanked the countries that had contributed troops to the current operation. He fully endorsed the remarks made by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, noting that multilateral intervention and conflict management were crucial elements of successful operations. While peace-keeping operations were not a panacea, they offered reassurance to the parties concerned while creating the proper atmosphere for sustained peace-making.

28. Peace-keeping operations could not by themselves prevent or change the military situation in a given area. However, they did have a psychological impact which prevented immediate recourse to armed force and helped create a better atmosphere in which to pursue a peaceful settlement. Peace-keeping forces must therefore remain in place so that ongoing negotiations could be concluded. The

(Mr. Gardezi, Pakistan)

link between the concepts of peace-keeping and peace-making must be maintained so that an effective and peaceful settlement of the conflict could be reached. The time factor was crucial in that respect, and impatience should be directed only towards the party that was obstructing the peace-making process.

29. He welcomed the joint statement issued on 30 October 1990 by the Soviet Union and the United States of America in which the two countries had emphasized the need to strengthen the role of the United Nations in crisis prevention by encouraging more active use of the good offices of the Secretary-General and the provision by the Organization of electoral assistance to countries requesting it. The experience gained during the past 40 years had showed that the United Nations peace-keeping forces had, by their mere presence, contributed to the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of an atmosphere conducive to the peaceful settlement of disputes. His delegation therefore endorsed the proposal regarding conflict avoidance.

30. The role of United Nations observers was basically a political one, and their presence in a country's territory served to focus attention on the imminent danger of conflict. Confidence-building measures and verification could also help prevent fighting from escalating. In that connection, his delegation proposed that the areas in which peace-keeping operations were taking place should be declared internationally protected zones and that any violation of those zones should automatically imply the application of pre-determined sanctions against the trespassers.

31. His delegation had taken note with interest of the statement to the General Assembly by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union in which he had remarked that the United Nations could function effectively if Member States agreed on a voluntary and temporary basis to delegate part of their sovereign right to the Organization and entrusted it with performing certain tasks in the interest of the majority. After briefly reviewing the origins of that question, he (Mr. Gardezi) said that, under the Charter, the implementation of a Security Council decision was not dependent on the consent of any one Member State. Even though most peace-keeping operations had been established with the consent of the host countries, that did not mean that the Security Council was obliged to obtain that consent in order to perform its functions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. The principle of consent could not be strictly adhered to in cases where an area was in dispute or under foreign occupation; however, that factor had to be recognized if a comprehensive system was to be evolved for dealing with issues of international peace and security, since it was obviously impossible to compel Member States to obtain the consent of a Power illegally occupying a territory.

32. Similarly, in the case of areas whose status remained in dispute or undetermined, the consent of the occupying authority could not be made a pre-condition for the stationing of peace-keeping forces or the continuation of an operation. Nevertheless, the mandate, nature or duration of a peace-keeping operation authorized by the Security Council could not be changed without the Council's express authorization.

33. Mr. BAEV (Bulgaria) said that after radical changes in the world political situation, there was currently a revival of confidence in the ability of the United Nations to fulfil its main mission: the maintenance of international peace and security. His delegation believed that the manner in which the Security Council had responded to the crisis in the Persian Gulf reflected the Organization's enormous potential in that area; it would be useful to hold an in-depth discussion on the options available. Bulgaria viewed peace-keeping operations as one of the Organization's most effective instruments for the peaceful settlement of disputes, as the success of UNTAG and ONUCA had demonstrated. His country supported the views expressed by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization (A/45/1) to the effect that the success of peace-keeping operations depended on a precise and workable mandate, the consent and co-operation of the parties involved, the consistent support of the Security Council and the readiness of Member States to volunteer personnel and adequate financial arrangements. A necessary condition for the further development of peace-keeping operations was the elaboration of a comprehensive system for their preparation and launching through adequate co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms which complemented political efforts. His delegation welcomed the work of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations and had therefore participated in its most recent session as an observer. His delegation fully supported the conclusions and recommendations contained in paragraph 39 of the Special Committee's report (A/45/330), which, if implemented, would make peace-keeping operations more efficient. There was currently a need to elaborate a generally acceptable set of political and legal principles for peace-keeping operations on the basis of existing practice.

34. Bulgaria welcomed the recent broadening of peace-keeping operations, especially their use for monitoring free and democratic elections and the implementation of agreements, for limiting conflicts and naval operations, etc. In that respect, attention should be paid to the ideas of establishing a system for early detection of international conflicts and crisis situations, the setting up of United Nations observer posts in regions of tension and the broader use of fact-finding missions. The idea of establishing regional centres under United Nations auspices for reducing tension was also very promising. His delegation endorsed the views expressed by certain States on the need to discuss ways of involving the permanent members of the Security Council in operations designed to uphold important decisions of the Council relating to maintaining international peace and security. It also felt there was a need to elaborate the concept of multinational United Nations forces for maintaining world peace and security.

35. Bulgaria considered that it would be appropriate to involve a broader circle of States in United Nations peace-keeping operations, permitting more frequent rotation of forces on a wider geographical basis. Bulgaria had officially stated its readiness to participate in the operation in Namibia by providing a military contingent and a group of civilian observers. A Bulgarian contingent had not been included in UNTAG, but Bulgaria hoped that it would have another opportunity to demonstrate its support of peace-keeping by participating in future operations. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/49, the Bulgarian Government had replied to the questionnaire regarding the elaboration of a registry of potential

(Mr. Baev, Bulgaria)

contributions by Member States of personnel, material and technical resources and services, and had declared its readiness to provide an infantry battalion of 405 men and 10 military observers.

36. As for the financing of peace-keeping operations, his delegation was of the view that it would be necessary to elaborate a mutually acceptable and flexible approach that would help tap a variety of sources in every instance. The question of the most rational use of financial resources should be considered during the preparatory work for every operation so as to ensure a reasonable balance between the growing role of the operations and the anticipated substantial costs involved in their launching. The desire should be to preserve their temporary nature, rather than have their mandate automatically extended by the Security Council, thereby making them practically permanent.

37. In conclusion, he reiterated his Government's readiness to participate in future peace-keeping operations, especially in Western Sahara and Cambodia. He hoped that a consensus resolution on peace-keeping operations could be adopted at a current session.

38. Mr. BERGH JOHANSEN (Norway), speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries, said that they remained firm supporters of United Nations peace-keeping operations. Nordic personnel currently participated in all ongoing peace-keeping operations and constituted almost 30 per cent of the peace-keeping forces. The past two years had seen a number of new peace-keeping operations. The Nordic countries also welcomed the successful completion of certain operations; that conformed with the principle of the temporary nature of such operations. The Nordic countries urged all parties concerned to co-operate fully with United Nations operations in order to enable them to fulfil their mandates and prevent them from becoming guardians of an unacceptable status quo.

39. General Assembly resolution 44/49 included a number of recommendations aimed at improving current peace-keeping activities and increasing their effectiveness. The Nordic countries welcomed the preparation by the Secretariat of a registry of potential contributions by Member States of personnel, material and technical resources and services, which would improve the Secretary-General's capacity to react rapidly to future demands. The Nordic countries hoped that at a later stage the registry might lead to the setting up of stand-by forces permanently at the disposal of the United Nations, similar to the system established by the Nordic countries.

40. With regard to the report on the use of civilian personnel (A/45/502), the Nordic countries considered that military personnel would continue to constitute the backbone of peace-keeping operations; new developments, however, had created the need for an extended use of civilians. The terms of their participation should be carefully studied with special attention given to the questions of their security, chain of command, financing and reimbursement. The Nordic countries looked forward to receiving the guidelines for training of peace-keepers which would be submitted by the Secretariat early in 1991. Training of personnel both

(Mr. Bergh Johansen, Norway)

within the Secretariat and from Member States was a prerequisite for effective peace-keeping. As peace-keeping expanded into new areas, the need arose for additional guidelines. The Nordic countries were willing to share their experience in that field with other interested nations.

41. The Nordic countries had been encouraged by the statement on peace-keeping operations made by the President of the Security Council on 30 May 1990. They supported the principles enunciated in that statement, namely, that operations must be launched and maintained on a sound financial basis, that assessed contributions must be paid in full and on time, and that peace-keeping operations were of a temporary nature. The statement had also confirmed the Council's intention to examine carefully the mandate of each operation, varying it in response to changing circumstances.

42. The Nordic countries noted with satisfaction the constructive approach adopted by the participants in the work of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations. One recommendation in the Special Committee's report (A/45/330) encouraged troop contributors and other interested States to hold informal consultations on operational and technical matters relating to the practical aspects of peace-keeping operations. After the adoption at the current session of a resolution on peace-keeping operations, the Nordic countries would take the initiative to organize such consultations and would invite the Secretariat to participate in them. They were confident that such an exchange of views would be beneficial to the troop contributors, other interested Member States and the Secretariat. They recommended that the Secretariat should also consider giving briefings on a regular basis. The Nordic countries welcomed the establishment of the Senior Planning and Monitoring Group. They looked forward to receiving the Secretary-General's report describing the responsibilities, functions and structures of the various Secretariat units dealing with peace-keeping operations.

43. The encouraging results in southern Africa, Asia and Central America over the past few years clearly showed the potential of peace-making operations. In that connection, the importance of preventive diplomacy in order to prevent tense situations from escalating into serious conflicts should also be stressed. The Nordic countries were currently preparing a study in that area. They had repeatedly emphasized the need for a secure and sound financial basis for all peace-keeping activities. Unfortunately, United Nations peace-keeping operations continued to suffer from a lack of resources. The Nordic countries emphasized that the financing of peace-keeping operations was a collective responsibility under Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations and that all such operations should be financed by assessed contributions. They therefore strongly supported the Canadian proposal to change the financing of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). All Member States had a legal obligation to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time. The low level of reimbursement to troop-contributing States might prevent many interested member States from participating in future operations.

(Mr. Bergh Johansen, Norway)

44. In the interest of efficiency, the Nordic countries hoped that at its next session, the Special Committee would concentrate its work on a limited number of issues which it could then discuss more thoroughly. It was also important for the session to be held on a fixed date in accordance with the time schedule submitted.

45. Mr. FREUDENSCHUSS (Austria) said that he was extremely disappointed with the results of the recent session of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations. The progress achieved had been negligible despite the time spent on consultations and the report of the Special Committee (A/45/330) contained a large number of hollow recommendations. A number of factors had contributed to those results, including the absence of some of the documentation already requested the previous year, a prolonged consultation process and, above all, the lack of forward-looking strategies, which had been particularly apparent in four areas.

46. First, there were the concerns of troop-contributing countries relating to the flow of information and to consultations. At the first meeting of the working group, his delegation had proposed an informal approach designed to alleviate the concerns of some delegations that new consultation structures would lead to a duplication of work, interfere with the day-to-day management of peace-keeping operations by the Secretariat or encroach upon the prerogatives of the Security Council. A watered-down version of the consultation mechanism had finally been incorporated into paragraph 35 of the report, encouraging "personnel contributors and other interested States ... to hold informal consultations on practical and technical matters related to practical aspects of peace-keeping operations, as appropriate". Since no such consultations had yet taken place, he assumed that the laborious discussions held on that point in the Special Committee had effectively discouraged interested States.

47. Secondly, there was the perennial problem of creating a sound and secure financial basis for peace-keeping operations. He considered that it was necessary, first and foremost, to eliminate the historical anomaly of the financing of UNFICYP by voluntary contributions. It should not be forgotten that the success of peace-keeping operations depended largely on the good will and generosity of troop-contributing States. However, such generosity had its limits. He regretted that the Special Committee had been unable to address that issue, and he supported the efforts undertaken by the Security Council to change the system of financing of UNFICYP.

48. Thirdly, the Special Committee had been unable to reach agreement on a recommendation concerning the establishment of a United Nations peace-keeping training centre, presumably because of the financial implications of such a proposal. However, at a time when peace-keeping operations were a "growth industry", the establishment of such a centre would be an investment which should pay ample dividends in the future. Until such time as it was established, it would be necessary to make do with national training centres, such as the one set up by his country in 1988 which was currently accessible to peace-keeping personnel from other countries.

(Mr. Freudenschuss, Austria)

49. Fourthly, there was the question of future uses of peace-keeping operations or related United Nations operations. One aspect of that problem was whether or not such operations should be national, regional or international. The Secretary-General had addressed that issue in his report on the work of the Organization (A/45/1), pointing out that the results of diplomatic initiatives by Member States or regional organizations, dispensing with the procedures of the United Nations, had so far been ambiguous, if not altogether discouraging.

50. With regard to the possible use of peace-keeping or similar operations in new areas, he considered that the United Nations had already acquired considerable experience in the monitoring and/or organizing of free and fair elections. However, the concerns expressed by some delegations with regard to possible interference in internal affairs should be addressed. In that connection, the Special Committee could discuss in detail which elements would have to exist in a country in order to justify the Organization's involvement in the monitoring and/or organizing of elections and the extent to which a situation could be described as not purely national but as having international ramifications. The Special Committee was the body best qualified to examine that concept and the question should certainly be considered at its next session.

51. Mr. SAVUA (Fiji) said that in the context of the historic changes which had taken place throughout the world, United Nations peace-keeping operations were being called upon to play a crucial role, and the United Nations must be able to adapt to new situations and demands. One of the most recent operations, the success of which had been well documented, had been carried out in Namibia and could be viewed as a model for future operations. His delegation looked forward to the Secretary-General's detailed report on the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) and believed that it would be useful for mounting future operations. However, UNTAG had enjoyed the luxury of time in which to prepare and revise its plans, which would not always be the case for other operations. Some peace-keeping operations would have to be launched immediately on the basis of ad hoc arrangements which could be improved later on. Having participated in such an operation, his country was encouraged by the continuing efforts of the Secretary-General and the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations to find ways and means of better reacting to various peace-keeping situations. Such initiatives had sought to assist troop-contributing countries to improve their state of preparedness and to overcome the initial problems which new operations encountered in the following areas: the status-of-forces agreements, the compilation of a troop-contributing registry and the development of standard operating procedures to ensure that troops arriving in mission areas were familiar with their tasks. In the past two years, those initiatives had led to concrete results, and he therefore supported the resolution to extend the mandate of the Special Committee.

52. To support those efforts troop-contributing countries should ensure that information needed by the Secretariat was provided in good time. Attempts should also be made to encourage the integration of national initiatives in regional programmes so that the burden of costs was shared and duplication avoided. Some of

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

those regional programmes were already in existence, but a central body was needed to co-ordinate efforts to ensure a better utilization of available resources. It would be logical for this co-ordinating function to be carried out by the Office for Special Political Affairs. In Fiji's view, that Office needed additional staff and finances in order to be able to respond adequately to the expanding role of peace-keeping activities. Those hopes and goals would not be realized, however, if the Organization continued to be plagued by the non-payment and late payment of assessed contributions. The review of the rate of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries conducted by the Secretariat in 1990 had been inconclusive and had failed to produce any recommendations.

53. United Nations peace-keeping forces had to face many difficulties and the assistance promised by the parties to conflicts was not always forthcoming. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) had been in Lebanon since 1978 and it seemed as if its troops were being held hostage to guarantee some semblance of peace while the parties concerned showed no desire for lasting peace. His delegation believed that the Security Council initiative aimed at reviewing the situation of UNIFIL was well timed and it hoped that the findings could be implemented as soon as the mandate came up for renewal. In Afghanistan, the resettlement of refugees continued to pose problems and, despite its reduced size, the Office of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan and Pakistan continued to play a crucial role. Fiji hoped that it would be possible to give the Office a wider and more active role when its activities were reviewed.

54. Fiji supported the launching of new peace-keeping operations and was willing to contribute additional troops for such purposes. It stressed, however, that the basic principles must be respected, namely, that the operation should have a secure and sound financial basis, assessed contributions should be paid in full and on time, all parties to the conflict should give their complete and unequivocal support to the Secretary-General and his representatives and the results and usefulness of ongoing operations should be subjected to periodic review.

55. Mr. NIETO (Argentina) said that his party had been participating in peace-keeping operations for a long time and that the United Nations was an irreplaceable instrument for that purpose. The principal aim of those operations was to contain regional crises which had deteriorated into armed confrontations. The Committee's debate should therefore focus on a consideration of ways to set up and to implement preventive mechanisms.

56. When deciding to mount or to renew a peace-keeping operation, the Security Council should clearly define the operation's goals and various stages. That would help dispel the negative impression which the automatic renewal of peace-keeping operations gave to the parties to a conflict and to the United Nations troops themselves.

57. The exchange of information on peace-keeping operations was essential to the smooth operation of national contingents deployed in the area and of those due to replace them, as well as to the co-ordination of decision-taking between the

(Mr. Nieto, Argentina)

Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Ministries of Defence and the armed forces of Member States. Meetings between Member States which made military or civilian contributions and meetings between those States and the competent offices of the Secretariat should be held more frequently and their discussions should be more thorough. The previously discarded idea of institutionalizing such contacts should be revived under a flexible mandate, providing only minimum secretariat services.

58. With regard to the Special Committee's working methods, a limited number of topics should be studied in detail. His delegation fully supported the draft resolution under consideration, and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

59. Mr. INBAR (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of Lebanon appeared to have deliberately misquoted a statement by the Israeli Minister of Defence, Mr. Moshe Arens, on developments in the south of Lebanon. The exact statement was as follows: Israel "would not allow various elements to attempt to attack the security zone in south Lebanon and the adjacent zone under the control of General Lahad. These regions are essential to the security of our northern border."

60. Contrary to the totally unfounded allegation by the representative of Lebanon, the Minister of Defence had made no reference to the Lebanese Government, to the question of its sovereignty or to its authority. The statement had been made in response to the threatened intensification of terrorist attacks by the Hezbollah and other groups which were not under the control of the Government in the region in question.

61. His Government had repeatedly reiterated its policy towards Lebanon. The lack of central Government authority in the south of Lebanon had rendered the Lebanese Government incapable of fulfilling its international obligations and preventing its territory from being used for the instigation, preparation and launching of acts of violence in the northern parts of Israel. Israel was therefore forced to exercise its right to defend itself and temporarily to assume a security role in a narrow zone in the south of Lebanon to prevent terrorist elements from infiltrating into Israel across its northern frontier. Israel had repeatedly declared that it had no territorial claims to Lebanese territory.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
20th meeting
held on
Friday, 23 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 75: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES (continued) (A/45/84, 306, 576)

1. Mr. SALAH (Jordan) said that the human rights situation in the occupied territories had deteriorated over the past three years as a result of intensified Israeli repression. In a few days, the intifadah would mark its third anniversary. The report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/45/576) showed that the life of the Palestinian people was becoming more difficult each day because of the physical and psychological suffering imposed by Israeli occupation. The United Nations must put an end to the situation by finding a just and durable solution to the Palestinian question. Israeli practices which flouted human rights were but one aspect of that question, which had been under consideration at the United Nations for over four decades. The Organization had a moral responsibility to resolve it, since the problem had been created by the United Nations.

2. Israel alleged that events occurring in Jerusalem were an internal matter, but that claim was invalid. The Israeli occupation of Palestine was a foreign occupation imposed by force and rejected by the Palestinian people as a violation of fundamental human rights. The Security Council had ruled that the fourth Geneva Convention applied to the occupied territories, but Israel had consistently rejected that position. Over the years, violations of the two Hague Conventions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and its two Covenants had persisted.

3. Israel had declared recently its unwillingness to give up the occupied territories and had insisted on pursuing aggressive policies contrary to the peaceful aspirations of the Palestinian people. Paragraph 467 of the report of the Special Committee, contained statements by Israeli government officials affirming that Israel intended to remain in the occupied territories and continue their development. The report warned of an impending major conflagration in the area unless steps were taken to remedy the grave human rights violations and ensure effective protection of basic rights and freedoms.

4. In the more than two decades since the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory had begun, all its policies had been designed to perpetuate the occupation, in flagrant violation of international instruments and General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. Its clear aim was to terrorize the indigenous population in order to force them off the land in order to further Israeli territorial expansion. The international community had expressed alarm, yet no specific measures had been taken to protect the Palestinian people. The Security Council resolutions passed had dealt with secondary factors. Israel had rejected all such resolutions, although they had been adopted by overwhelming majorities

5. The more the Palestinian people escalated their intifadah, the more Israel escalated its repressive measures. Deaths, including child victims, injuries,

(Mr. Salah, Jordan)

detentions, destruction of homes, deportations, separation of families, the closing of school and university, confiscation of property, fines, curfews, interruptions in telephone and electrical service were but some of the measures imposed.

6. Justice in the occupied territories involved clear cases of discrimination. Palestinian offenders would be subjected to the most severe punishments, often with no legal safeguards and no evidence presented against them. Israelis appeared to receive more sympathy. They were often cleared of violations or given short sentences not commensurate with the crimes committed. Israel boasted that it was the only democracy in the region, yet occupation ran counter to the principles of democracy. In the absence of justice, there was no democracy. Israel also impeded the work of international humanitarian bodies such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

7. The Security Council, in its resolution 672 (1990), had condemned the massacre at the Haram Al-Sharif and had called on the Secretary-General to submit a report on the situation. Israel had refused to admit the Secretary-General's mission on the pretext that Jerusalem was its sovereign capital, in conflict with the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention.

8. In the Secretary-General's report (S/21919) Palestinians had expressed the feeling that they were targeted at all times, and were not secure even in their own homes. That was the result of the climate of terror imposed by Israel. In early November, Israeli security forces had launched a campaign of repression in the Gaza Strip which had resulted in 700 casualties, more than 200 due to the use of live ammunition. That new repression was a frantic attempt to terminate the intifadah.

9. International sympathy for the Palestinian people should be transformed into effective action to put an end to the situation and to enable the exercise of their legitimate rights to self-determination in an independent State on their national soil. The report of the Special Committee had recommended urgent measures to safeguard the human rights of the Palestinian people. Israel must comply with the fourth Geneva Convention and with Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and the International Peace Conference on the Middle East must be convened. Jordan also supported placing a United Nations force in the occupied Palestinian territories to protect the Palestinian people. Israel and one of the super-Powers were the only States not supporting those recommendations. His Government hoped that super-Power would change its position and would join the efforts to force Israel to abide by the international will.

10. Mr. GARDEZI (Pakistan) said that the intifadah, which was currently in its third year, had proved to be a landmark in the Palestinian people's struggle for independence from Israeli colonialism. The Palestinians had demonstrated to the world that the policies of repression aimed at creating a "Greater Israel" would not be permitted and that they were prepared to make the necessary sacrifices to liberate their homeland.

(Mr. Gardezi, Pakistan)

11. The efforts to promote a dialogue between the Israelis and the Palestinians had reached an impasse. The Israeli authorities had tried to suppress the intifadah with their usual brutality, details of which had been catalogued in the report of the Special Committee (A/45/576). All the charges made in the report had been corroborated by the international media and by non-governmental organizations following events in the occupied territory. Since the beginning of the uprising in December 1987, hundreds of Palestinians had been shot to death by the Israeli armed forces or had died from beatings, tear-gas and other causes; about 25 per cent of the fatalities had been children under 16. More than 90,000 Palestinians had suffered crushed bones in beatings administered at random by Israeli soldiers in implementation of the policy of "might, force and beatings".

12. In addition to the use of force, the Israeli authorities had resorted to a policy of mass arrests, administrative detention without charges or trial and deportations. Palestinian human rights organizations estimated that more than 85,000 Palestinians had been imprisoned. Several new prison camps had been built in which conditions were reported to be in clear violation of international human rights standards. Since the beginning of the uprising, the Israeli authorities had deported 60 Palestinians from the occupied territories in defiance of Security Council resolutions and the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, bringing the total number deported since 1967 to nearly 2,000.

13. The Israeli authorities had also begun an escalation of collective punishment measures directed against the entire Palestinian population. Villages had been sealed and the delivery of foodstuffs and other essential items had been prevented, trees had been uprooted and crops bulldozed, and property had been randomly destroyed in raids on Palestinian homes.

14. The growing resort by Israel to the use of force against the Palestinian population had been accompanied by an intensification of measures against Palestinian economic, social and cultural institutions. Universities and other educational institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip had frequently been closed. Interim arrangements to permit the continuation of basic education for Palestinian children had been banned by the Israeli authorities.

15. The measures aimed at suppressing the intifadah had been taken against the backdrop of intensified de facto annexation of the occupied territories. The Israeli Government had compounded those crimes by bringing in Jewish immigrants from all parts of the world and settling them in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, displacing the Palestinian and Arab owners, who were being driven out of their ancestral homeland by a systematic policy of oppression.

16. Also of growing concern was the Israeli desecration of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, one of the holiest shrines of Islam. The killing of 22 Palestinians and the wounding of more than 200 in October 1990 was yet another criminal act committed against the suffering Palestinian people.

(Mr. Gardezi, Pakistan)

17. The events of the past few years had demonstrated the necessity of ensuring international protection for the Palestinian people until such time as an Israeli withdrawal and a comprehensive peace had been established. The Israeli rejection of the efforts by the international community and the brutal acts of repression against the Palestinian people needed to be dealt with firmly, in accordance with the recent unanimity displayed by the Security Council in handling other cases involving non-compliance with United Nations resolutions and threats to international peace and security.

18. The intifadah had brought about new political attitudes on the part of the Palestinian leadership. The realistic and constructive attitude of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as reflected in the Palestinian acceptance of all United Nations resolutions relevant to the Palestine question, gave Israel an opportunity to work out its future relations with an Arab State in Palestine. The only realistic option remaining was for Israel to overcome its "Masada complex" and respond positively to the Palestinian proposals.

19. His country had consistently upheld the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and statehood under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The proclamation of an independent Palestinian State had been an event of historic importance, constituting a milestone in the march of the Palestinian people towards their goal. Israel should seize the opportunity afforded by President Yasser Arafat's peace initiative to find a formula for peace in the region.

20. Mr. ADNAN (Malaysia) commended the Special Committee on its thorough and detailed report. Despite the constraints under which the Special Committee operated, the report had again underscored the continuing injustice being perpetrated by the Israeli authorities in the occupied territories. The Israeli authorities' refusal to co-operate could only be interpreted as yet another attempt to cover up the truth and pursue their policy of oppression.

21. The report exposed the various atrocities to which the Palestinians and other Arabs were subjected. First, the harassment of Palestinian civilians by Israeli authorities continued unabated. Prolonged curfews, collective punishments and limitations on freedom of expression, worship and other freedoms were still being imposed. Palestinian lands and property were still being seized.

22. Secondly, Palestinians were being illegally expelled from their homeland in violation of article 49 of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. Instead of responding to the demands of the international community for the abolition of such reprehensible practices, the Israeli defence authorities had added a new punitive measure, namely, the "conditional banishment" of persons alleged to be Palestinian activists.

23. Thirdly, in further violation of international law, the Israeli authorities were massively resettling Jewish citizens and new Jewish immigrants in the occupied territories and other Palestinian areas. Those settlers were participating in acts

(Mr. Adnan, Malaysia)

of violence against the civilian Palestinian population. The arrival of huge numbers of immigrant Jews was part of the Israeli authorities' policy for expansion and occupation and was obviously designed to facilitate the final annexation of the occupied territories.

24. His country deeply deplored Israel's policy of harassing and deporting Palestinians; together with other non-aligned members of the Security Council, it had worked for the adoption of Council resolutions 636 (1989) and 641 (1989). Israel must ensure the safe and immediate return to the occupied Palestinian territory of those deported and desist immediately from deporting any other Palestinian civilian. It must also abide by the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949.

25. He utterly rejected Israel's policy of establishing a "Greater Israel" through the settlement of Jews in the occupied territories. Such measures were a blatant attempt by Israel to change the demographic character of the occupied territories; the international community had a duty to prevail upon Israel to put an end to that policy.

26. The harassment and deportation of Palestinians, as well as other inhuman and repressive measures, were vividly described in document A/45/576. As recently as October 1990, he had learned with profound sorrow and anger that 20 Palestinian civilians had been unjustifiably killed by the Israeli security forces. The world demanded that Israel should fully comply with Security Council resolution 672 (1990) and co-operate in solving the Palestinian issue.

27. History had shown that no people could remain subjugated and deprived of their inalienable right to a homeland. When their rights were further trampled through a series of unjust laws, an uprising was inevitable. The intifadah could not be used as a pretext for Israeli oppression so long as the Israeli authorities continued to deprive the Palestinians of their legitimate rights.

28. His delegation shared the Special Committee's views concerning the worsening of the already precarious human rights conditions of the Palestinians and other Arabs in the occupied territories. At a recent meeting of the Security Council, his delegation had called on that body to institute the following measures to ensure the safety and protection of Palestinians: first, Israel, as the occupying Power, should accept the de jure applicability of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and abide scrupulously by its provisions; secondly, a conference of the High Contracting Parties to the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 should be convened to address the problem of Israeli compliance; thirdly, the International Committee of the Red Cross and UNRWA should play an enhanced role in the occupied territories; fourthly, a United Nations mechanism should be established to monitor the situation in the occupied territories and report back to the Security Council.

29. Given the new unity of purpose which the Security Council had demonstrated in the past three months in dealing with the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, it must show the same spirit and vigour in dealing with Israeli intransigence. He

(Mr. Adnan, Malaysia)

fully supported the measures outlined in the report of the Special Committee, while remaining convinced that the basic rights and freedoms of the Palestinian people could only be protected through a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement, which could be achieved through the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations.

30. Mr. YU Shuning (China) said that the report of the Special Committee and many other documents showed clearly that in the past year the Israeli authorities had continued to ignore the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and to violate the human rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs in the occupied territories. Many Palestinians and Arabs had been killed, arrested, imprisoned, deported or had suffered collective punishment. Their houses had been demolished and their children had been deprived of the right to education. Recently, the oppression had escalated drastically, and the Palestinians in Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip had suffered further casualties, arousing universal condemnation and leading to an intensification of their protests and resistance.

31. The international community was deeply concerned with the problem of how to protect the Palestinian people and other Arabs in the occupied territories. It was of the utmost urgency that the Israeli Government, as a signatory State, should adhere in good faith to the relevant provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. In that connection, he supported the initiative to increase the staff of UNRWA and to send United Nations monitoring personnel to the occupied territories.

32. It should not be forgotten that the fundamental solution to the problem lay in Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, the restoration of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, mutual recognition between the State of Palestine and the State of Israel and peaceful coexistence between the Arab and Jewish peoples. He supported the convening of an International Conference under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council and the parties to the conflict and a direct dialogue between the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel.

33. Mr. INBAR (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Israel must act to maintain public safety and order in the face of the violence perpetrated against both Jews and those Arabs who dared to reject the line followed by terrorist organizations. There was little doubt that Jordan served as a platform for such organizations in their attacks on Israel and as the main base for the intifadah. The Jordanian embrace of Saddam Hussein was a mistake comparable to the one that it had committed in the 1960s when its attempts to co-operate with the PLO had led to Black September, when thousands of Palestinians had died. At that time Palestinians had fled Jordan and sought shelter in Israel. Israel, for its part, was determined to establish conditions which would enable Jews and Arabs to live in peace.

34. Mr. AWAWDEH (Jordan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that it was quite clear that Israeli practices in the occupied territories violated human rights and contravened the relevant international instruments. In fact the broader issue was that of the national rights of the Palestinian people. Israel's attempts to divert attention from the central issue would not delude the Committee. His delegation rejected the Israeli allegation that Jordan served as a base for the uprising in the occupied territories.

35. The central issue was not one of public safety and order, as claimed by Israel, but a serious political question which had been unresolved for some 40 years. Israel's intransigence would not lead anywhere. The Israeli Government must respond to the Palestinian policy of peace. The Israeli allegation of Jordanian support for Iraq was beneath contempt.

36. Mr. INBAR (Israel) said that the representative of Jordan should see the situation in his country as it really was. As for Palestinians and the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, there had been reports implying that Palestinians could expect harsher treatment in future at the hands of the Kuwaitis.

37. Mr. MANSOUR (Observer for Palestine) said that if Israel was truly concerned about the fate of the Palestinian people it should immediately end its policies, which had caused pain and suffering to so many Palestinians. The imposition of harsh measures and the numbers of casualties belied the Israeli claim that the Government was simply seeking to maintain order. The real aim was to derail efforts by the international community to resolve the tragic situation of the Palestinian people. If Israel was really interested in dialogue and was genuinely tolerant, why had it imprisoned so many Palestinians, removed elected officials, imposed censorship and imprisoned journalists?

38. The PLO sought peace, not to inflame the situation. His delegation did not want to dwell on the past, but wished to seek a way forward in an effort to resolve the problem. The parties should lay aside their enmity and negotiate, under United Nations auspices, on a basis of justice and fairness, taking into account the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and statehood. Such an approach would end the bloodshed and mark a new chapter in the history of the Middle East.

39. Mr. AWAWDEH (Jordan) said that the reports before the Committee documented many instances of Israeli inhumanity. Israel was an occupying Power, a fact recognized by all except the Israelis themselves, who had usurped the rights of the Palestinians. The representative of Israel should try to be realistic and respond to the points made by the observer for Palestine.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.